


SRI NARAYANA GURU

# INDIA

# THE FOUNTAIN OF PEACE

## (A SOURCEBOOK OF LEADERSHIP FOR THE NEW ERA)

WITH A FOREWORD BY

Prof. P. NATARAJAN, M. A., D. Litt. (Paris)

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TO

DEENABANDHU

C. F. ANDREWS

"There lives more faith in honest doubt,
Believe me, than in half the creeds."

## FOREWORD

India has attracted the attention of nations through the ages and the causes have been many and varied. In recent years the interest has slowly been shifting its centre from that of mere curio-hunting or archeology to one of genuine and general concern in her affairs. And the question is being asked: "How is India going to express herself in the world of to-morrow?" In fact, this question has very often been put to me by friends, Europeans and Americans, who were eager to know about India during the five years of my sojourn in the West, especially in the international city of Geneva. My friend Mr. N. Lakshmanan has come across the same enquiring spirit at Tagore's International University.

In approaching his task, Mr. N. Lakshmanan has, after the approved method of some American writers, contented himself with a source-book presenting other people's opinion rather than arraying his own. This has simplified matters a great deal and the need to wade through material is thus avoided. The copious notes and bibliography which he gives will be of vital help to anyone whose interest is stimulated by the contents. The book is bound to serve a genuine need constantly felt among students in India and abroad.

Mr. Lakshmanan has had a very unique advantage in compiling this book. He is keenly sensitive to the aspirations of India. Fortune has brought him into living contact with most of the leading personalities

of the Georgian Era (1911—1936) who typify the stages of the laboured evolution of India's soul. Mr. Lakshmanan has been able to put his finger on just those questions which have been and are fundamental. He has travelled with, lived with or met most of the persons he quotes, and this is a qualification which few others possess for such a compilation. Politicians and social reformers, religious leaders and philosophers have all come within his purview. And no secular or religious bias has perverted or prevented the strictly objective approach and appraisal of values. A spirit of scientific catholicity prevails right through the book.

I have known Mr. Lakshmanan for some years now as a journalist who has kept up a high standard in his writings, having been trained under Mr. K. Natarajan, the father of sane journalism in India. I do wish that Mr. Lakshmanan had not given us so sparingly of the materials collected from the sources of renascent Asia of which, I am convinced, he has much more to give. Let us hope that the present volume is but a beginning made in the direction of meeting a long felt want in this field of literature.

P. NATARAJAN.

*Fernhill, Nilgiris*
*25th June 1937*

## EDITOR'S PREFACE

This book is based on my personal acquaintance with the modern religious and social movements all over India. My sustained interest in them, during the past quarter of a century, is due to my firm belief that dynamic religion and social service go together and are inseparable. It is therefore a great joy to me to dedicate this book to Deenabandhu C. F. Andrews. Towards the close of his recent world-tour, he wrote back to say that I have his full consent for dedicating this book to him and added: "I am sure you are right in taking part in labour problems and above all for working along co-operative lines." *Deenabandhu* means "Friend of the poor and the lowly." It is a religious title conferred on him by Gandhiji; for, Mr. C. F. Andrews is the best loved Englishman in India and is a recognised authority on Asian and African labour problems.

In 1919 and 1922, Gurudeva Rabindranath Tagore and Professor C. F. Andrews toured in South India spreading ideas on Santiniketan, Visva-Bharathi and Sriniketan or the Visva-Bharati Institute of Village Reconstruction. As a member of this travelling party, I studied the problem of untouchability from Palghat, the gate of Malabar, to Cape Comorin, the Land's End. The personal contacts with Sri Narayana Guru, Doctor Palpu, Kumaran Asan and Siva Prasad gave me an early insight into the Temple-entry movement which has culminated in the Proclamation of November 1936.

The urge to publish this book has come from that famous Temple-Entry Proclamation of His Highness the Maharaja of Travancore. Replying to the address presented by the Mambalam Sri Narayana Mission, His Highness said:

The object of the Proclamation is to manifest that equality in the sight of the Creator and tolerance are the fundamental tenets of the Hindu faith which have been evident in the life and precepts of successive teachers from Sankaracharya and Ramanuja down to Kabir and Nanak, Swami Vivekananda and Sri Narayana Guru.

Another equally important purpose is to bring about a consolidation of our community and the growth of self-respect among all its members as well as a spirit of harmonious comradeship with people professing other faiths. The country-wide demonstration which this step has evoked has shown throughout India a spirit of unity and fellowship.

His Highness the Maharaja and his Mother have now returned from a six weeks' tour in Bali and Java. Dr. J. H. Cousins was a member of the travelling party. He, like Tagore before him, has pointed out the cultural unity of Asia.

Poet T. Lakshmana Pillai has composed sweet Tamil verses in praise of the temple-entry proclamation. I thank the eminent composer for his Preface to this book.

Professor Palpu Natarajan M. A. D. Litt (Paris) has kindly given me permission to reproduce in this book a pencil drawing of Sri Narayana Guru by Mary Longworth A. R. C. A. His book *The Way of the Guru* (The Sufi Association, Geneva, 1931) has won the appreciation of savants like M. Rolland and Sir F. Younghusband. I am equally thankful to Mr. P. Natarajan for writing a Foreword to my book and for sending me a biographical study of the Guru, *A Prophet of Peace*, by Swami Dharma Theerthan. At my request, Rabindra Nath Tagore met Sri Narayana Guru at Sivagiri Mutt, (Varkala, Travancore). Before the Guru passed into Samadhi (1856–1928), Gandhiji also met him.

The principle of historic continuity is brought into bold relief, as this book is intended to supply a religious background to the rural reconstruction movement in India. In 1926–27, while acting as unofficial secretary to Dr. N. Gangulee, a member of the Royal Commission on Agriculture, I had the advantage of making a special study of village guidance in the pioneer rural centres all over India. I was then delighted to find that the unique feature of the research work at Sriniketan and Visva-Bharati was the place of honour given by Rabindranath Tagore and his fellow-worker Kshiti Mohan Sen to the Bauls or the village poets of Bengal. Dr. A. A. Bake of Leyden University and Prof. Kshiti Mohan Sen of Visva-Bharati gave me (and an American friend) a series of illuminating talks and thus stimulated interest in Folk Religion. At my request, Professor Sen

kindly began to prepare a Paper on the Synthesis of the Aryan and Dravidian. Owing to his preoccupations with the Bengal Literary Conference, he got no leisure to complete his English essay in time for publication in this volume. However, I hope to make use of it in my forthcoming monograph on Village Guidance.

For convenience of reference, it may be stated here that Professor Sen's essay on "The Bauls And Their Cult of Man" first appeared in the Visva-Bharati Quarterly for January 1929, and now appears along with Tagore's Hibbert Lectures of 1930 published in book form by George Allen and Unwin as The Religion of Man.

Gandhiji returned to India in 1915. Towards the close of that year I met him, Dadabhai Naoroji and Mr. K. Natarajan, the distinguished editor of the *Indian Social Reformer*, Bombay. Since then, the contents of that well-known weekly journal have been of vital help to me in conducting study classes and Y. M. C. A. summer schools of rural service. During my apprenticeship in the office of the I. S. R in 1918, I came to know that the old files of the I. S. R (which are rare in India) were carefully kept and used in the Missionary Research Library of New York. Mr. K. Natarajan himself says in his recent book, *Our Trip To America*, that a girl graduate called on him at Chicago for elucidation of several passages in articles in the I. S. R ranging over many years. She said

that she was writing a thesis on India based principally on materials furnished by the *I. S. R.* Mr. M. R. Jayakar (whom I met at Erode in 1930) was agreeably surprised to find that I was making a similar use of the precious files of the I. S. R and he encouraged me to go on with this labour of love.

The I. S. R has been conducted from its commencement (in 1890) not only as an advocate of the social reform movement, but also as a record of all the events and phases of contemporary life which "an Indian Green will find necessary for a constructive history of the Indian people under British rule." This is obvious from the selections published in this book. My aim as well as that of the I. S. R is to give the reader the material to form his own judgment independently of the editor. The work of selection has been going on during the past seven years. And from time to time I have been submitting to Mr. K. Natarajan a list of selections meant for publication in book form. As he left the selection work entirely to my discretion, I wish to state that I am alone responsible for any act of omission or commission. I am grateful to him and the other illustrious personages whose writings enrich this volume which is intended to benefit earnest students in India and abroad. The book is so planned as to be useful not only to the general reader but also to the leaders of study circles and summer schools.

I owe a debt of gratitude to the revered Kasinath N. Dewal and his son N. K. Dewal, the sculptor of Santiniketan fame, for their help in introducing me not only to prominent leaders but also to "the illustrious obscure" all over India. Several friends and relations of mine have helped me to expedite publication of this book. I am thankful to all of them, especially to my young friends E. V. Somasundaram, M. Karuppannan and my nephew Shanmukham who revised the proofs. My daughter Saraswati prepared the Index. My thanks are also due to the Directors, the Manager and staff of the Coimbatore Co-operative Press for their prompt and neat printing of this book.

N. LAKSHMANAN.

*Coimbatore,*
*July 1937.*

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**ABBREVIATIONS**

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|---|---|
| I. S. R. | *Indian Social Reformer*, Bandra, Bombay. |
| M. R. | *Modern Review*, Calcutta. |
| V. Q. | *The Visva-Bharati Quarterly.* |
| G. B. T. | *The Golden Book of Tagore.* |
| Ronaldshay. | *The Heart of Aryavarta.* |
| Rolland. | *The Life of Ramakrishna.* |
| Schweitzer. | *Indian Thought and its Development.* |

# PREFACE

This book contains the utterances of competent men, and deals with the higher aspects of Indian national life, the ideals and larger interests of India, such as her religion, the unrealised greatness of her religious leaders, her social amelioration, the needs of the hour, and the like. Most of them are informing, thoughtful and thought provoking, and have been carefully and very intelligently selected by one whose keen interest in the national unification and development of India is well-known. The reader could only wish that more articles of the kind dealing with some of the other burning questions of the day were included. The book stands for a complete reconciliation of all divergences, for unity in diversity and for the merging of all apparently conflicting elements into the compact, consolidated life of a united, strong and self-respecting people. While attempting to place the greatness of India's leaders and India's ideals in the proper light before the thinking section of the world, the articles uphold the claims, not of narrow nationalism but, of healthy internationalism.

I may draw the reader's particular attention to the able articles on the great Travancore Temple-Entry Proclamation and the stirring address of H. H. the Maharajah of Mysore and of H. H. the Gaekwar of Baroda.

T. LAKSHMANA PILLAI.

*Trivandrum,*
*28. 6. 1937.*

# EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

One generation ago, India was considered by the outside world to be "an old country which had a past, but no future. The hope and confidence that are the keynote of the present were not even felt; so dismal was the outlook. Rabindranath Tagore and Mohandas Gandhi—each an artist in his own sphere and indubitably among the world's immortals, could hardly be conceived as a possibility." † Then came the New Era (1911—1936) so full of mighty happenings.

"On every side I trace the signs and stirrings of new life" said His Majesty King George V in reply to the Address presented by the representatives of the University of Calcutta, quarter of a century ago. During this memorable national week of December 1911, I went on pilgrimage to Bengal, the spiritual home of Renascent India. By the courtesy of Rev. Hem Chandra Sarkar, I was present at "the immortal dinner" in the Calcutta Girls School associated with the memory of Miss Mary Carpenter, the fellow-worker of Raja Ram Mohan Roy in England. To me

> Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
> But to be young was very heaven.

† G. B, T. 161. Till 1912 (i.e. Rabindra Nath Tagore's fiftieth year) his writings were not translated into English. G. B. T. is a world homage from leaders of international fame in celebration of his seventieth birthday. M. R. 1931. My review in I. S. R.

The epoch of Rabindranath reminds us of the Age of Kalidasa with its Renaissance, the Age of *Navaratna* or nine gems, i.e. celebrities. Among those present were Poet Rabindranath Tagore, Artist Abanindranath Tagore, Gopala Krishna Gokhale the Statesman, the Scientists J. C. Bose and P. C. Ray. Womanhood was nobly represented by Mrs. J. C. Bose and Mrs. Sarojini Naidu. Philosophy and non-party Journalism had their votaries in Brajendra Nath Seal and Ramananda Chatterjee.§ In that gathering of the builders of unity, I missed two leaders — Sister Nivedita and Sri Aurobindo Ghose — whose writings first stimulated my travel-studies in Renascent India. The Noble Sister whom Poet Rabindranath Tagore delights to claim as the Mother of the People had just then passed away in the peaceful surroundings of the Himalayas. Rishi Aurobindo, like Gurudev Rabindranath, had renounced politics in 1910; and he got absorbed in the Synthesis of Yoga at Pondicherry in South India.

Sister Nivedita's Introduction to Okakura's *Ideals of the East* and her own classic *The Web of Indian Life* fired my youthful imagination and opened my eyes to Indian vistas, past and present. My "pilgrimage of the Soul" led me on to the Temple-garden of Dakshineswar where Sri Ramakrishna spent the greater part of his

§ Sir J. C. Bose, Sir P. C. Ray and Sir B. N. Seal in G. B. T. 16, 206, 233.

* Rolland, 33, 820.

God-intoxicated life. Then at the Belur-Math, I had the consolation of having "the monastic hospitality" of Prof. Mahendra Nath Gupta, the well-known "M" who has recorded the *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*.§ Nivedita's tribute of praise to Swami Vivekananda in *The Master As I Saw Him* enabled me to appreciate Paul Sabatier's *Life of Saint Francis of Assisi*.¶ This was not due to a blind zeal for religion, "the opium of the masses."

What shall I say of the writings of Sri Aurobindo? His critical appreciation of the inimitable lyrics of Rabindranath was read by me first in *The Karmayogin* of 1909. I am glad to find the first para reproduced and fully revised in *The Golden Book of Tagore (89–92)*. What I read in the same journal in 1909 on the value of religion in national life is now reproduced in the Sri Ramakrishna Birth centenary number of the *Prabuddha Bharata* (Awakened India) and *The Vedanta Kesari*. Sri Aurobindo's concluding paras may be quoted here.

"Religion always, in India, precedes national awakenings. Sankaracharya was the beginning of a wave that swept round the country culminating in Chaitanya in Bengal, the Sikh Gurus in the Punjab, Sivaji in Maharashtra and Ramanuja and Madhwacharya in the South. Through each of these a people sprang into self-realisation, into national energy and consciousness

§ Cf. Description in the Earl of Ronaldshay's book, Constable & Co., 1927. Ronaldshay is Lord Zetland, Secretary of State for India.

¶ Hodder & Stoughton, 1908.

of their own unity. Sri Ramakrishna represents a synthesis in one person between all the leaders. It follows that the movements of his age will unify and organise the more provincial fragmentary movements of the past.

Ramakrishna Paramahamsa is the epitome of the whole. His was the great super-conscious life which alone can witness to the infinitude of the current that bears us all oceanwards. He is the proof of the Power behind us, and the future before us. So great a birth initiates great happenings."

Sri Ramakrishna was "the consummation of two thousand years of the spiritual life of three hundred million people... his soul animates modern India."§ It is noteworthy that India has never lacked messengers of God, founders of sects or religions. Now, the Sri Narayana Mission "has greatly contributed to the uplifting of the oppressed classes in Southern India and its activities have in a measure been allied to those of Gandhi... Ramakrishna used to ask himself: "Are there no more of God's wells, which these have found and from which I have not drunk?"*

### The Fountain of Peace

The main title of this book I owe to a conversation of Poet Rabindranath Tagore at Trivandrum in the year 1922. His writings and speeches of this period are embodied in *Creative Unity*. "Let us admit" he

§ Rolland, *Life of Ramakrishna*, (Mysticism and Action in Living India) p. 14. Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Almora, Himalayas, 1931.

* *Ibid*, 167.

says "that India is not like any one of the great countries of Europe, which has its own separate language; but is rather like Europe herself, branching out into different peoples with many different languages. And yet Europe has a common civilisation, with an intellectual unity which is not based upon uniformity of language."§ The English historian has expressed the same idea in a rather different form by saying that "the history of India presents certain features of resemblance with that of Italy; a country imperfectly protected by a northern wall of snowy mountains; held for a long time by a dominant race; sinking its nationality till it became a mere *geographical expression*; and then, after the lapse of many troubled ages, beginning to make progress towards unity."† Elsewhere in this book is an extract from Mr. C. F. Andrews comparing the spirit of India with the spirit of Italy. What is the Italian spirit? In his Introduction to *Caesar Borgia— A Study of the Renaissance*, J. L. Garner has described it as follows:—

The Renaissance in Italy was much more than a revival in literature and the graphic arts; it was the supreme development of Italian civilization as a whole, the most perfect expression of the genius and intellectual life of the peninsula. The chief causes of the Italian Renaissance, causes inherent in Italy herself, were, above all, liberty of the individual mind and social freedom.*

§ Tagore: An Eastern University, *Creative Unity*, Macmillan, 1922.

† H. G. Keene, *History of India*, Vol. II. pp. 389–390.

* *Cf.* Italy and India in Pandit J. Nehru's *Autobiography*. p. 430 (John Lane The Bodley Head, London, 1936)

Many writers on Renascent India—from Andrews to Aurobindo—have laid stress on historic continuity.§ Mr. H. C. E. Zacharias has however failed to do so. In recent researches, the fundamental unity of India is emphasised by several writers; but this is not the place to elaborate the point. "To attempt to present in outline the content of what is usually understood as Indian Culture is to transfer on to a post-card the entire Himalayan system, with its two thousand miles of variety and sublimity."* In his foreword to *The British Connection with India*, the well-known author of *The Heart of Aryavarta* says: "Briefly put, the effect of the impact of Western thought upon the thought of India, has been to stir a people whose cultural history, generally, stretches back with remarkable continuity over a period marked not by centuries but by millennia, to a fresh effort at self-expression." Mere historic continuity however is not everything, for, as Rabindranath said, even a tombstone is permanent. What is truly abiding is creative unity. This principle of creative unity was never absent from India. As Mr. S. V. Viswanatha puts it, "A study of the ancient history of India reveals the fact that the divergent cults and creeds sank their prejudices and differences to realize the unity and the peace of her past."¶

Like Rabindranath the river poet, Dr. Sir Brajendra Nath Seal and His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore

§ *Cf.* Ronaldshay, pp. 132-171.

* K. T. Paul, *The British Connection with India*, 1927, p. 215.

¶ *Racial Synthesis in Hindu Culture*, p. 197, Trubner's Oriental Series, 1928.

speak of the Fountain of Peace—the Peace of the Spirit. The French Prophet of Peace, the biographer of Sri Ramakrishna, says that religion is never a finished product. "It is ceaseless action and the will ceaselessly to strive. It is the spring of a fountain, never a stagnant pool."† M. Romain Rolland has explained it further:—

I belong to a land of rivers. I love them as if they were living creatures, and I understand why my ancestors offered them oblations of wine and milk. Now of all rivers the most sacred is that which gushes out eternally from the depths of the soul, from its rocks and sands and glaciers. Therein lies primeval Force and that is what I call religion.¶

He adds "If there is one place on the face of the earth where all the dreams of living men have found a home from the very earliest days when man began the dream of existence, it is India."§ Well has it been said by a leading Muslim thinker that the continuity of religious progress among mankind is a subject of enthralling interest to the student of humanity.* Recent research has proved that Saivism is the most ancient living faith in the world.‡

† Rolland, *India on the March*, M. R. April, 1929.

¶ Rolland, 7. *Cf*. Buddhist springs of truth, Macnicol, *op. cit.* p. 11.

§ *Ibid*, 21. *Cf*. Asiatic Fountain for eight hundred million souls in *San-goku;* B. K. Sarkar, *op. cit.* p. 236, Shanghai, 1916.

* Syed Ameer Ali, *The Spirit of Islam*, p. XVII, Christophers, London, 1922.

‡ "Among the many revelations that Mohenjo-daro and Harappa have had in store for us, none perhaps is more remarkable than this discovery that Saivism... takes its place as the most ancient living faith in the world." Sir John Marshall, *Mohenjo-daro and the Indus Civilization*, Vol. I. *Cf*. *Dance of Siva* by Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy.

## The Spirit of India

"I love India," Rabindranath was heard to say in 1922, 'not because I cultivate the idolatry of geography, not because I have had the chance to be born in her soil, but because she has saved through tumultuous ages the living words that have issued from the illuminated consciousness of her great sons—Satyam, Jnanam, Anantam Brahma: Brahma is Truth, Brahma is Wisdom, Brahma is Infinite; *Santam, Sivam, Advaitam:* Peace is in Brahma, goodness is in Brahma, and the unity of all beings."

This is "The Spirit of India" which Rabindranath has recently emphasised in his Foreword to the Sri Ramakrishna Birth Centenary Memorial volumes.* These three words—Santam, Sivam, Advaitam—I have used as the key-note to my book.

The Sage of Santi Niketan (The abode of Peace) said in 1923: "With the realisation of the ancestral wealth of our own culture comes our responsibility to offer to share it with the rest of the world."§ Regarding Western culture and its ideals, Poet Tagore manifests a balanced judgment. He says, for instance: "It is only by really knowing the Europe that is great and good that we can effectively guard ourselves from the Europe that is base and greedy."† Tagore, as Pandit J. Nehru says, has given to our nationalism the outlook of internationalism.‡

* *The Cultural Heritage of India.*

§ Ronaldshay, chapter XX and p. 236.

† Macdonell, *India's Past*, p. 233, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1927.

‡ G. B. T. 183, Du Bois 74, Tagore's Poem on Africa and Asia, M. R. June 1937.

## Jawaharlal Nehru And the Revolt of Youth

In Pandit J. Nehru's *Autobiography*, there is a stimulating chapter on "What is religion?" He also longs for a world-culture in India. Now, all over the world, the rising generation is fast losing faith in organised religion.† The Japanese newspapers warned the students in the different Universities of Tokyo not to listen to the words of the Indian Poet, Rabindra Nath Tagore, because he was the poet of "a defeated nation." Mr. C. F. Andrews was then in Japan and said: "It was a cruel taunt, unworthy of a high-souled people, such as the Japanese. And it was untrue... I have learnt the lesson that the political motive and the social motive, when separated from the highest motive of all—the search for the Infinite Truth—are vanity and vexation of spirit. They are not sufficient, in themselves, to bring about a real national regeneration."*

During April and May 1924 in China, Tagore said: "Some of your patriots were afraid that, carrying from India spiritual contagion, I might weaken your vigorous faith in money and materialism. I assure them that I have not convinced a single sceptic that he has a soul, or that moral beauty has greater value than material power."§

† Lindsay Report, pp. 54-56.

* C. F. Andrews, *To The Students.* (S. Ganesan, Madras, S. E. 1921) pp. 19, 13. *Cf*. Japan and World Peace, G. B. T. 26, 116.

§ Talks In China, pp. 119-120.

## Schweitzer's World-View

M. Romain Rolland's volume contains a brilliant chapter on "The Builders of Unity" and gives a synthetic interpretation of the work and worth of eminent leaders from Raja Ram Mohan Roy downwards. On similar lines, Dr. Albert Schweitzer gives a World-view of the Indian Thinkers. Under the auspices of the Visva-Bharati Students Union, I have spoken of this great hero's sacred work in the forest hospital at Lambarene. I read Schweitzer's English volume, only after compiling my book, and I am agreeably surprised to find some very interesting parallels.

Dr. Schweitzer has discussed the problem of Indian thought with Professor M. Winternitz of Visva-Bharati fame and Mr. C. F. Andrews. Dr. Schweitzer also says that he found Romain Rolland's penetrating studies on Ramakrishna and Vivekananda very inspiring. His careful statement on the Gita and world literature is quoted on page 73 of my book.

Like the Buddha and the Bhagavad-Gita, says Schweitzer, the *Kural* desires inner freedom from the world and a mind free from hatred. Like them it stands for the commandment not to kill and not to damage.*

The list of the builders of unity will be found useful by those who wish to have a connected idea of the leaders of the modern religious movements in India.

* Schweitzer p. 203. The best translation of the *Kural* (or The Maxims of Tiruvalluvar) is by the late lamented V. V. S. Iyer, Madras, 1916. At Mylapore, Poet Tagore met the members of the Tiruvalluvar Academy on 8. 10. 1922. *Kural* is a Tamil classic. *Cf.* "Christ and Tiruvalluvar" in T. Lakshmana Pillai's *Essays*.

**Rolland on the Builders of Unity**

| | |
|---|---|
| Ram Mohan Roy | (1774—1833) |
| Debendranath Tagore | (1817—1905) |
| Keshab Chandra Sen | (1838—1884) |
| Dayananda Saraswati | (1824—1883) |
| Ramakrishna | (1836—1886) |
| Vivekananda | (1863—1902) |
| Rabindranath Tagore | ( b. 1861) |
| M. K. Gandhi | ( b. 1869) |
| Aurobindo Ghose | ( b. 1872) |

Aurobindo Ghose "is as firmly convinced as Vivekananda that the spirit of India is destined to lead mankind, while Tagore sets his hopes on a philosophy in which the thought of the East and the thought of the West will unite in sharing what is best and most profound in each other's spiritual possessions."*

Schweitzer is also authority for the statement that Sir S. Radhakrishnan (b. 1888) is strongly influenced by Poet Rabindranath Tagore. "The World's Unborn Soul" was the title of his Inaugural lecture delivered before the Oxford University in 1936.† I have used it as the title of a section in my book. What Mr. K. Natarajan (b. 1868) wrote in 1935, I have given in italics on page 140. India is the only country which can stand Professor Einstein's acid test of protection for Minorities.

* Schweitzer, 249 Macnicol, *op. cit.* p. 316.

† Oxford University Press.

# INDIA

# THE FOUNTAIN OF PEACE

## SANTHAM, SIVAM, ADVAITAM.

The weary giant is seeking peace; and as the *fountain of peace has ever flowed from the East*, the face of troubled Europe is instinctively turned to-day towards the East. Europe is a child, who has been hurt in the midst of her game. She is shunning the crowd and looking out for her mother. And has not the East been the mother of spiritual humanity, giving it life from its own life?

How pitiful it is that we, in India, are unaware of this claim for succour from Europe which has come to our door; that we fail to realise the great honour of the call to serve humanity in her hour of need!

...When I was resting alone in my room, in the hotel at Hamburg, timidly there entered two shy and sweet German girls, with a bunch of roses for their offering to me. One of them, who spoke broken English, said to me — "I love India." I asked her — "Why do you love India?." She answered — "Because you love God."

—MAHAKAVI TAGORE

## MY NATIONALISM IS INTERNATIONALISM

— MAHATMA GANDHI

# THE INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY *

DR. BRAJENDRANATH SEAL

A truly national University in India must be international. India has always been the meeting-ground of diverse civilisations. India is at once ancient, mediaeval and modern. And she is united to the Semitic East of Western Asia, as she is united to the Mongol East of Far Cathay. Universalism and synthesis have therefore been India's message throughout the ages, in the Religion of the Gita, in the Sarva Dharma (Universal Religion) of the Jina, in the Sarvagama-pramanya (all-religions true) of the tenth century, in the Bharata-pantha (the All-India Road) of Kabir, in Akbar's Dream, in the Yezur-Veda of Nobili, in Raja Ram Mohan Ray's cosmic vision. *That perpetual fountain of Universalism has not dried up on this soil*. A world gone mad and clanking the chains in Hymns of Hate, looks, and looks not in vain, to the East, nay to India, for a new gospel of Freedom, a gospel born of *the Peace of the Spirit* in the oneness of the Brahman. §

Even in Pouranik India, the Indian Universities studied the Yavana-mata, the foreign cult and culture of the times. This was the last but one of the 32 sciences,(?) the penultimate science. The strange spectacle of National Universities in a modern India declaring war against that world culture, the Yavana-mata, with all the violence (and strife) of a Durvasha's soul-force,

*Convocation Address: The University of Mysore, Oct. 14, 1921,

§ Para-Brahman.

constitutes one of the great Betrayals in History, the betrayal of the Mother by her best beloved, nay, her own truest child.!

A national education which abjures Science, machinery and foreign commerce misses the great outstanding fact in the History of ancient Indian University organisation and the connected History of India's Commerce with the world. That fact is this:—the great Indian Universities harboured the experts in machinery (Yantra vidyas) and the Chemists and metalurgists, and the three great Indian discoveries or inventions which followed, the fast dye, the indigo extract and the tempered steel,—enabled India to command for more than a thousand years the markets of the East and the West, and secured to her an easy and universally recognised pre-eminence among the nations of the world as the Mistress of the Middle East, more so than the Munera Terræ, the perfumery and spices of her woods, the pearls of her seas, or the diamonds of her mines. A sane Nationalism would revive the educational policy that led an Eastern country to that great achievement, a world-wide foreign commerce from the Eastern Archipelago to the shores of East Africa and South Europe, without the Imperialism of a Rome or a Spain. And if unfortunately India gave the secret of the Damascus blade to the world, an early instance of science ministering to the arts of destruction, she also gave the Buddha and the Perfect Law to a world in darkness and in chains. A sane Nationalism in a National Indian University would seek to harmonise science and mechanism with Ahimsa,* and hold forth

*Non-violence, the doctrine of Buddha and Gandhi.

tribulation, the Indian ideal, once realised in History, of a non-imperialist world commerce, alike in natural commodity and in spiritual freedom.*

## RELIGIOUS HARMONY§

H. H. THE MAHARAJAH OF MYSORE.

I believe with deep conviction that religion is fundamental to the richest and strongest life of the nation. There are diverse religions in this land of ours, and frequently there exists a most irreligious hostility between them. But we have gradually been coming to understand that the unity is much deeper than the differences, that while in creed and custom we are far enough apart, in worship and in aspiration we are one. This being so, the creed and custom of each religion among us is surely worthy of reverent study by the followers of every other.

You have reminded me that your present church was built by my grandfather of revered memory ninety years ago, and it is interesting to recall the inscription that was put upon it then. It ran:— "In the name of that only God—the Universal Lord, who creates, protects, and reigns over the universe of Light, the mundane world and the assemblage of all created lives—this church is built 1843 years after the incarnation of Jesus Christ, the Enlightenment of the world, as man." Throughout these many years the church thus dedicated has been the spiritual home of innumerable people, where in poverty

*Dr. Seal's friend, Poet Rabindranath Tagore is the Founder-President of *Visva-Bharati* and of the *Greater India Society*.

§Speech delivered, in 1933, when laying the Foundation Stone of a New Catholic Church in Mysore.

and suffering they have found peace, and in trouble a wisdom that passes the mere understanding, so that every stone of it has become dear to them. There is some sadness in the thought of its dis-appearance, yet it is joy to think of the rising up of a worthier temple, to be brooded over by the same eternal spirit, and to remain for centuries a shrine of holiness and healing.

The new church is nobly planned, and it will be built largely from the devout offerings of the very poor. This Church indeed will be strongly and securely built upon a double foundation—divine compassion and the eager gratitude of men. Nor can I forget, as foot by foot it rises, those devoted labuors of the clergy without which it must have remained a dream. You, My Lord Bishop, have been associated with Mysore as a parish priest, and later in your present high office, for as many years as I can remember. To you and to your clergy the State and City of Mysore are indebted for countless deeds of charity and good will, and for endless effort for the enlightenment and uplift of the people. Yourselves you have long forgotten, but your labours cannot be hid, and this great building will be a memorial of heroic toil and sacrifice.

May this Church of Saint Philomena, the Foundation Stone of which I now proceed to lay, be not merely the worthy centre of the spiritual life of your own Roman Catholic people, but also *a fountain of peace* and good will and the zeal for all true service.*

*The Janaka Maharishi of Modern Times is to deliver the opening Address before the World Conference of the Y. M. C. A. which meets at Mysore, for the first time in Asia, on 2—1—1937.

# SAN GOKU

OR

# INDIA, CHINA and JAPAN

## THE RENAISSANCE IN INDIA

*We are living to-day in India in one of the great Ages of Faith, such a period as that which saw the birth of Nalanda and Taxila of old. My own mind goes back for its parallel to that Age of Faith in Europe,—the wonderful Thirteenth Century, When St. Francis of Assisi sang his songs of joy at the beauty of all creation; when Giotto painted his marvellous pictures; when Dante wrote his immortal epic of the purification of the human soul till it attains the beatific vision of the Divine Presence.*

C. F. ANDREWS.

## INDIA'S CONTRIBUTION TO HUMAN WELFARE

I. S. R. *Bombay, November 28, 1915.*

Under the heading "What has India contributed to Human Welfare?" Dr. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy has contributed an article to the *Athenæum*. We cannot help thinking that a more appropriate and accurate heading would have been, "What India might have contributed or may yet contribute to Human Welfare?" Starting with the premise which, notwithstanding the enormous assumptions and the wide field of controversy involved in making 'race' the basis of speculation, contains an essential truth, namely, that each race must contribute something essential to the world's civilization in the course of its own self-realization and self-expression, Dr. Coomaraswamy proceeds to show that "the heart and essence of the Indian experience is to be found in a constant intuition of the unity of all life, and the instinctive and ineradicable conviction that the recognition of this unity is the highest good and the uttermost freedom". There will be very few to dissent from his opinion that "all that India can offer to the world proceeds from her religion," and but very few to agree with him when he adds "nowhere else has it been made the essential basis of sociology and education". No country and no race has presented to the world the picture of a social life constant to and continuous with its religious ideals. Mahomedan countries and Mahomedan races have, perhaps, approached nearest to such constancy and continuity. But the contrast between the highest

intuition of Hindu philosophy and religion and the basic idea of the Hindu social system, is only surpassed by that between Christ's Sermon on the Mount and the great War (1914–18) that is desolating Europe. "All life is one," says Hindu Philosophy. "There shall be four thousand different castes the members of each of which are debarred from interdining and intermarrying except among themselves," says Hindu Society.

Dr. Coomaraswamy tells us that we must not judge of Indian society, especially Indian society in its present moment of decay, as if it actually realised the Brahmanical social ideals. Apart from the anomaly of appropriating the more beneficial results as the natural outcome of, and of repudiating the less beneficial ones as alien overgrowths on, a social ideal, we might ask Dr. Coomaraswamy, if we may not judge of Brahmanical social ideals from the present state of Hindu society, from which state and period of it may we judge it from. However much we may differ from him as regards opinions and, sometimes, even facts, we cannot withhold from Dr. Coomaraswamy the respect due to a coherent and consecutive thinker. He tells us that the Brahmanical social ideals find their least imperfect embodiment in, or, at any rate, they may be most fairly judged by reference to the socio-legal institutions of the Code of Manu and other ancient Hindu scholastics. It is now generally accepted that, while these authorities undoubtedly set down many things as they actually existed in their time, they also set down many more as existing, which did not exist, but which they thought

ought to be. Such a confusion of tenses is not unknown in the history of other realms of speculation, the most notable illustration being the first sentence in the American Declaration of Independence which declares that "All men are equal," while what it really means is that all men ought to be so in relation to the State. Dr. Coomaraswamy himself takes this view.

Filled with enthusiasm for this doctrine of the unity of interdependence of all Life," he writes, "the Brahman Utopists set themselves to found a social order upon the basis provided. In the great epics they represented the desired social order as having actually existed in a golden past, and they put into the mouths of the epic heroes not only their actual philosophy, but the theory of its practical application. In the Dharmashastra of Manu and the Arthashastra of Chanakya—perhaps the most remarkable sociological document the world possesses—they set forth the picture of the ideal society, defined from the standpoint of law.

The attempt to prove the sociological value of ideas by reference to an ideal state of society as depicted in the ancient books, is not likely to yield convincing results. Mankind cannot make the fateful voyage of life in "a painted ship upon a painted ocean." As a fact, however, even the ideal state of society, the Utopia, of our ancient thinkers fails to satisfy some elementary considerations of justice and equity; and Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy is driven to an unconscious representation of the reverse of a fact as fact in his effort to make even the Utopia square with the philosophic formulæ of ancient India. We must, however, say at once that we agree with Dr. Coomaraswamy in the distinction he

makes between what may be called the Hindu and the Christian ethical methods, the ideals being the same in both cases. The latter, at any rate as it has been developed, lays down one set of social standards as the only ethical, and either condemns the majority who do not come up to it as unregenerate, or seeks to escape from the cynical *cul de sac* by shutting its eyes to the deviations in practice of those who profess it in theory. The Hindu method, on the contrary, is to stigmatise no conduct as being in itself non-ethical. The ethical quality of one's conduct is in direct relation to the light within one. To know the better way and yet choose the worse, is the essence of sinful conduct—to know not merely as an intellectual perception but as a spiritual fact; in other words, to know and believe that it is a better way. But, surely, this is not the ethical method of caste even in the Code of Manu. Dr. Coomaraswamy, however, is determined that it is; and hence the following extraordinary misstatement of a well-known fact.

To describe the caste system as an idea or in actual practice would require a whole volume. But we may notice a few of its characteristics. The nature of the difference between a Brahman and a Shudra is indicated in the view that a Shudra can do no wrong, a view that must make an immense demand upon the patience of the higher castes, and is the absolute converse of the Western doctrine that the King can do no wrong. These facts are well illustrated in the doctrine of legal punishment, that that of the Vaishya should be twice as heavy as that of the Shudra, that of the Kshathriya twice as heavy again, that of the Brahman twice or even four times

as heavy again in respect of the same offence; for responsibility rises with intelligence and status. The Shudra is also free of innumerable forms of self-denial imposed upon the Brahman: he may, for example, indulge in coarse food, the widow may re-marry. It may be observed that it was strongly held that the Shudra should not by any means outnumber the other castes; if the Shudras are too many the voice of the least wise may prevail by mere numbers.

Dr. Coomaraswamy's article bristles with foot-notes indicating his authorities for many of the statements. In the passage we have quoted, the authority for the statement that the Shudra can do no wrong is given but not for the graduated scale of punishments illustrative of the humane attitude of caste to the Shudra caste. The passage to which Dr. Coomaraswamy refers as meaning that the Shudra can do no wrong, really says: "A Shudra cannot commit an offence *causing loss of caste*, and he is not worthy to receive the sacraments" The omission of the italicised phrase makes a very great difference, and we are surprised that Dr. Coomaraswamy should have overlooked it. Only in the case of theft, and there, too, as regards only the amount of fine to be levied from the thief is the scale of punishment graduated in favour of a Shudra. The penalties in case of defamation, for instance, are prescribed on a contrary principle. The religious and philosophic intuition of India as to the unity of Life is its noblest gift to mankind. But it is also its saddest shame that no serious effort was ever made to work it into the social institutions of the country.*

* Compare the last section of this *Symposium* on "Removal of Two Blots on Hinduism."

# TAGORE ON GREATER INDIA *

I. S. R., *November 18, 1922.*

In the Commemorative volume published by the London University Press on the sexcentenary last year of Dante, there is an essay entitled "the Italy of Dante and the Italy of Virgil," by Mr. J. W. Mackay, which is of profound interest to Indian readers. Geographically, India like Italy is one of the most striking instances of a country with natural boundaries. They both lie, to use Mr. Mackay's description, with but one gap, within a ring-fence of sea and mountain wall. That gap, in the case of Italy, is the open gateway on the North-Eastern frontier through which from time immemorial the peninsula has again and again been invaded and repopulated. These words apply equally to India, with the single difference that the open gateway in our case is on the North-Western frontier. The analogy does not end here. Notwithstanding her distinctive geographical unity, Italy was not a single nation or a single state until the unification of the last century.

"Italy, throughout history," writes Mr. Mackay, "has been the seat of kingdoms, republics, principalities, confederacies, which were all local and partial, and generally in acute conflict, racial and cultural, as well as political, among one another. When it approached unity most nearly, it was not as a self-developed and independent state but as a portion or province of a larger empire."

* My friend Mr. S. Ganesan (Triplicane, Madras) published *Greater India* during Tagore's second South Indian tour of 1922. *N. L.*

The dawn of history finds Italy divided between four large ethnically distinct groups, besides many smaller ones among whom there was no trace and no sense of unity. In Dante's time, that is the 14th century, there were fourteen distinct regional dialects, while the local sub-dialects ran to not less than a thousand. Italy as one country and one nation was the dream, first, of Virgil and then of Dante. And that dream came to fruition after many vicissitudes many centuries after the dreamers who in their poems laid the firm foundations of that unity. Mr. Mackay observes that the immense power of words over human affairs is nowhere shown more remarkably than in the influence exercised on later history by their great and glorious poetry.

India, too, has had her dreamers who dreamed to good purpose of her fundamental unity. Following her special line of evolution, this unity was first worked out in the sphere of religion and philosophy. In a little book entitled *the Fundamental Unity of India,* Mr. R. Mukerji, whose historical researches have helped so much the Indian renaissance, has shown how the different places of pilgrimage seem designed to impress this great fact of Indian unity on the minds of the people. Buddhism from the North brought on the revival of Hinduism from the South. Political evolution also tended steadily to enlarge the sphere of unity. The Mahomedan and Moghul empires but carried forward this ancient impulse which in the British Empire reached its fullest consummation. On the first

shock of Mahomedan conquest, the movement towards political unity was severed form the movement towards cultural unity. As Mahomedan rule tended to become national the gap was in the way of being closed. British rule re-opened it, and owing to the fact that British rule has persisted so long in remaining foreign, while at the same time reaching out deeper into the national life than the previous Governments, the task of bringing up cultural unity to the level of the present political unity has become unprecedentedly complex. The mere politician with his limited vision cannot help us much. The poet with a large vision alone can show us the way to the goal. We have before us a little volume of four essays written by Rabindranath Tagore in connexion with the *Swadeshi* movement in Bengal during the years 1905 to 1910. Since then the Poet has written much on national problems, but in these four essays are enunciated with all the force of his simple directness the essential aims which the national movement should keep in view. In the very first essay, entitled "Our Swadeshi Samaj," he strikes the key-note of his Indian ideal. He writes:

The realisation of unity in diversity, the establishment of a synthesis amidst variety—that is the inherent, the Sanatan Dharma of India. India does not admit difference to be conflict, nor does she espy an enemy in every stranger. So she repels none, destroys none, she abjures no methods, recognises the greatness of ideals, and she seeks to bring them all into one grand harmony.

The Poet shows how, under the most unpromising conditions, the genius of India for synthesis never deserted her. These reactions have even now not ceased to work. The Poet remarks on the fact of all the great religions being together in India as evidence that she is destined to be the home of a supreme religious synthesis. That is also our belief. The Poet puts Christianity as the last to come to India. As a fact, it was one of the first. Syrian Christianity in Malabar came earlier than any other great non-Indian religion excepting perhaps the Hebrew.

...The last essay, to our mind, is the most important. In it the Poet impresses upon us the fact that India does not belong to any caste or creed, but to all who have made their homes here. He writes:

" In the evolving History of India, the principle at work is not the ultimate glorification of the Hindu or any other race. In India, the history of humanity is seeking to elaborate a specific ideal to give to general perfection a special form which shall be for the gain of all humanity; nothing less than this is its end and aim. And in the creation of this ideal type, if Hindu, Moslem or Christian should have to submerge the aggressive part of their individuality, that may hurt their sectarian pride, but will not be accounted a loss by the standard of Truth and Right.

The Poet's ideal is the same as that of RAJA RAM MOHAN ROY who, he says, "did not assist India to repair her barriers, or to keep cowering behind them,—he led her out into the freedom of Space and Time, and built for her a bridge between the East and the West."

## CLEAN LIFE IN RURAL INDIA

(C. F. ANDREWS)

India has possessed, as historians have pointed out, greater powers of rejuvenescence, both intellectually and physically, than almost any other nation. This has taken place *in spite of the adverse influences of an enervating tropical climate.* § India seems almost to have found the secret of perpetual youth. Yet no sexually degenerate people could possibly have continued vigorous and prolific, both mentally and physically, so long. For if sexual abuse had been general, India must have suffered the same fate as Babylon and Rome. It is her village life which has kept India eternally young; and that village life is clean.*

## THE POET ON THE PLATFORM

I. S. R., *December 2, 1922.*

There can be no more striking proof of the extent to which culture and wealth have become divorced in India than that a thinker and poet of the transcendental eminence of Rabindranath Tagore should have to undertake lecturing tours in order to raise funds for the noble University he is creating at Bolpur. It is impossible to appreciate adequately the spirit of utter self-abnegation to what is felt as a compelling national duty, which alone could have persuaded him to adopt the role of an itinerant lecturer. The Poet belongs to all India, indeed to all the world: and when he speaks

§Italics mine. **Young India*, p. 174, May 31, 1928.

it must be to all without distinction of race or creed. The Poet, we are sure, would have winced when Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy introduced him to his audience on Monday as the Nobel prize-winner for poetry. His own address was not in tune with the universalism of his poetry and philosophy. Some of the general statements to which he committed himself in that address have no other reason for them except the psychic necessity which every speaker feels to get into sympathetic touch with his audience. Indeed, they represent lapses from the habitual thought of the Poet as it appears not only in his poems and stories, but also in his reasoned expositions of his view of human, and more particularly Indian, history. We refer especially to his references to the Indian climate as tropical and enervating, and as lending itself to the contemplative, introspective life that characterised India. Also, the number is increasing of Indian students of history who do not accept the theory—for it is no more than that—of the Aryan immigration or of the Aryans having been immigrants of a superior race culture.

The enervating influence of a tropical climate is one of the many suggestions thrown out by a school of western historians of civilization, of which Buckle is the best known, to account for the subjection of tropical countries. Another, since disproved by the rise of Japan, is that rice-eating races are doomed to be dominated by wheat-eating and meat-eating ones. At a certain stage of English education in this country, we swallowed with avidity every generalization of Western writers that

appeared to shift the responsibility for our condition from our character and capacity to climate and environment. We did not pause to consider that the data from which these generalizations were deduced, were mostly limited to a small area of the earth and to a small space of time and that, even within these limits, they were by no means extensive. Mahatma Gandhi's onslaught on English education as inducing slave-mentality, is largely misplaced, but it holds true of these debilitating suggestions which have had the effect of making us think of ourselves as doomed by natural laws to a national life devoid of energy and initiative. It is not the tropical climate but such theories that are enervating, The Indian thinker and teacher has to wage unceasing and implacable war against them. Take the very case of Persia whose climate is not tropical and, therefore, according to this theory, not enervating. Arabia, on the other hand, is a land of tropical deserts. How is it that the Arabs, when they came under the influence of Islam, developed the energy and activity which conquered not only Persia but nearly half of Europe? The Sun is an energising, not an enervating, influence. The ancestors of the Parsis as well as of the Hindus did not worship the Sun from ignorance or superstition. The most vigorous growth in the vegetable and animal world is to be found in the tropics. Why should a tropical climate be an enervating influence on man alone? Further, history tells us that wealthy and powerful empires were founded in the tropics and great civilizations flourished there. On the

other hand, people in temperate climates have not always been remarkable for energy and activity. Sir Henry Maine held that the idea of progress was born in Greece. "Except the blind forces of Nature," he wrote, "nothing moves in this world which is not Greek in its origin." The climate of Greece is probably much the same as in classic days, but Progress has made her home elsewhere.

> You have the Pyrrhic dance at yet,
> Where's the Pyrrhic phalanx gone?
> Of two such lessons why forget
> The nobler and the manlier one?

So lamented Byron nearly a century ago. To-day Greece, betrayed by her own statesmen, turns savagely upon them and shoots six of them dead by order of a military tribunal! Yet the same Sun shines to-day on Greece as when Athens was the mother of Arts and Eloquence.

The fact is that it is not the climate which affects the body, but the ideals which inspire the mind, that make individuals and nations strong and great. Even Western thought is fast emerging from its nineteenth century opinion of the mind being subservient to the body. Contempt for metaphysics is affected only by men who have drifted out of the main stream of European life and thought into glittering and comfortable places in Asia and Africa. Medical science to-day is recognising Psychology as of at least equal importance to it as Physiology. The recognition of the influence of suggestions and auto-suggestions on capacity and

character, is revolutionising our ideas of Education. Everyone can observe for himself that temperature and environment affect him most when his inner being is least sustained by ideals. The present depression of India is due not to the climate but to a falling off in faith and ideals. Our forefathers, while they did not court poverty, pain and death, did not stand in such abject terror of them as we, the so-called educated men of India, do to-day. They loved something, even were it a superstition, better than a comfortable life. They longed to live but not on any terms imposed upon them. Even if the physical climate has a depressing influence, if the mental climate is maintained at its proper temperature, its effect can be prevented. The late Prof. William James wrote an essay on "the moral equivalent of war" in which he showed how the state of mind in which the martial virtues grow and thrive, can be cultivated without the devastating medium of war. Even so a temperate mental climate can be created and maintained in a torrid physical climate by a well-ordered social and national economy. Tagore seems to suggest that the metaphysical and contemplative life of India is the outcome of her enervating, tropical climate. On the contrary, we think that the truly contemplative life is the most intense form of human activity. It is impossible to persons in a depressed state of mind or body. A Tamil sage likens the state of absorbed contemplation to the top which seems to be at rest while at the height of its spin. India was great morally and materially when she was great in contemplation and produced

metaphysicians whose thoughts sublime pierced the night like stars. And she will be great again when she casts aside her trammels of custom and caste and lets her free spirit soar as in the days of old when Death itself could not deter her from the high-hearted, fearless pursuit of Truth. No Indian thinker has inculcated this so persistently and consistently as the Poet, and it is because his words (as reported in the Press)* seemed to imply some temporary deviation from his own teaching, that we have thought it our duty to make these observations.

## CHU CHEN-TAN §

The Chinese Characters in the title-page (*Talks in China*) form the name given to the Poet by his Chinese friends on the occasion of his 64th birthday in Peking on the 8th May, 1924. The personal name Rabindra, or Ravindra, was translated into Chinese as *Chen-tan (Tan* as Sun-rise for '*Ravi*'–'Sun', and *Chen* 'Thunder' for *Indra* the Thunder God), and the syllable *Chu*, from *Tien-chu*, an old Chinese name for India, was adopted as his surname. The three characters forming the full name stand as *Chu Chen-tan* which may be Englished as the Thunder-voiced Rising Sun of India. P.

*In 1922, Poet Tagore prepared this paper during his second tour in South India, on his way to Bombay. Mr. C. F. Andrews accompanied the Poet. As a member of the travelling party, I am in a position to state that the press report is inaccurate. Ravi means Sun; and, surely, Rabindranath has always realised that the Sun is an energising influence. *N. L.*

§ R. Tagore, (*Talks in China*) Visva-Bharati, 1924-25.

## THE ARYAN INVASION OF INDIA

(*By* DRAVIDIAN).

I. S. R., *December 9, 1922.*

"The Aryan invasion of India," writes Mr. P. T. Srinivasa Iyengar in his essay* entitled *Life in Ancient India in the age of the Mantras,* "is a theory invented to account for the existence of an Indo-Germanic language in North India." It is thus one of the many by-products of Comparative Philology which, owing to Max Muller's genius, enjoyed a preeminence much beyond its merits for a short time. Almost all his generalisations from language to race have gone by the board, except this of the Aryan invasion of or irruption into India. The earliest European Orientalists did not accept the theory. Muir, for instance, observed that the Aryans could not have entered from the West, because it was clear that the people who lived in that direction, were descended from those very Aryans of India; nor could the Aryans have entered from the North-West, because there was no proof from history or philosophy that there existed any civilised nation with a language and religion resembling theirs, which could have issued from either of those quarters at that early period and created the Indo-Aryan civilisation. In a question of this kind, tradition is much more important than

*Published by Messrs. S. Varadachari & Co., 4, Mount Road, Madras, 1912.

critical scholarship. Every immigrant nation or race has preserved the memory of the land it emigrated from with jealous care. The Jews and the Parsis, among ancient races, and the Americans and Australians among moderns, are conspicuous examples. The Vedic bards, however, either did not know of any such event or took extraordinary care to keep out of the Vedas any reference to it. "The Mantras," says Mr. Iyengar, "do not contain any traces of traditions of such an invasion or the remotest allusion to any foreign country which was the first home of these tribes or recollections of the route through which they came". In the introduction to his *Vedic Reader* Professor A. A. Macdonnell who, of course, is an "invasionist" states that from the geographical data of the Rig Veda especially the numerous rivers there mentioned, it is to be inferred that the Indo-Aryan tribes when the hymns were composed occupied the territory roughly corresponding to the North-West Frontier Province and the Punjab of to-day. The references to flora and fauna bear out this conclusion. Hymns, however, do not usually confine their allusions to the natural scenery of the places where they are composed. If the Rig Vedic bards had memories of an ancestral land from where they came, they would certainly have not omitted all recollections of it in their prayer and praise. Not only, however, is there no reference to a motherland which they had left, but their love of the country where they dwelt amounted to a passionate adoration only possible to persons whose most intimate thoughts, memories and associations centered solely upon it.

An allied theory which is of even more questionable validity is that the people of India before the supposititious Aryan invasion or immigration was of inferior civilization and culture. Economists distinguish between four stages of civilization: the hunting, the pastoral, the agricultural and the manufacturing. Cattle-breeding, writes Professor A. A. Macdonnell, appears to have been the main source of livelihood of the people of the Rig Veda hymns. In other words, they were mainly in the pastoral stage of civilization. Where did they learn cultivation from? Agriculture, observes Mr. J. F. Hewitt, in his *Ruling Races of Pre-historic Times*, was first systematically practised on a large scale in the forest lands of Southern India, and it was emigrants from thence who carried the rules of the village communities with them as they progressed northward. He maintains that he has proved conclusively that rice-cultivation flourished in Central and South India in the early Stone Age, countless ages before the Veda was composed, and that it was the growing of rice which led to the formation of permanent villages. As distinguished from the Vedic Indians of the North, the South Indians made the village, and not the family, their national unit. It was this agricultural race which first founded a system of national education, the lessons they had to teach being "not the rules of the art of war or the mysteries of religion, but those which embodied the results attained by the long series of experiments which had formed a national science of agriculture". If further proof were wanted to show

that the non-Vedic people of India, were not inferior to the Vedic tribes, it is to be found in the glowing descriptions in the Ramayana itself of the prosperity of the enemy country. Thus Rama gazing across the Godavari from his hermit's hut at Nasik, the then southernmost Aryan settlement, sees:

> Boundless fields of wheat and barley are
> with dewdrops moist and wet,
> And the golden rice of winter ripens like
> the clustering date;
> Peopled marts and rural hamlets wake to
> life and cheerful toil
> And the peaceful happy nations prosper
> on their fertile soil,

And beyond them the shining domes and towers of a magnificent city—Janasthan. Nor is there any indication in the Ramayana that the Dravidians were considered to be an inferior race. Ravana who could so disguise himself as to be completely mistaken in broad daylight by Sita for a holy Brahmin, could not have differed much in his features from the race with which she was familiar in her native Behar or in her adopted Oudh.

As for colour, both Rama and Krishna* are expressly described in the texts as dark-hued, and in popular printings even to-day they are given a blue-black

* C. V. Vaidya: *Epic India*, Mrs. Radhabai Atmaram Sagoon, Bombay, 1907. English translation by R. C. Dutt in Everyman's Library Series.

complexion. "Look not upon me, because I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me," says the adored in the "Song of Solomon". "I am black, but comely." The poet of the Ramayana has in the interests of Aryan morality given a forced explanation of the episode, discreditable even upon his showing, of Surpanakha. But cutting off of women's noses is a frequent offence at the present day and the motive of it is almost always jealousy on the part of the man. The incident anyhow shows that Surpanakha had a nose to be cut. Occidental Orientalists have concluded from the word "anasa" which occurs in one solitary context in the *Rig Veda*,* that the non-Vedic Indians were a "noseless" or "flat-nosed" people. The great Hindu commentator, Sayana, having never heard of "Anthropometry" and, relying only on tradition, translated the word as meaning "of rude speech." The tests of Anthropometry, supposed to have been unerring, have been roughly assailed by the discovery that the shape of the cranium and the nose can be, and often are, moulded by manipulation by parents and nurses, sometimes consciously, during the period of infancy. Ravana was not a rude worshipper of stocks and stones but was a great devotee of Siva whom Rabindranath Tagore takes to be a non-Aryan deity adopted by the Aryans. If that be so, it is curious that this adopted deity has come to be the supreme deity of the Hindu pantheon. At Rameswaram in the South, tradition still points to a Linga which Rama worshipped

*The latest edition is by Dr. A. K. Coomaraswamy.

before crossing over to Lanka. High up in the Himalayas, the deity worshipped at Badrinath is Siva. In fact, Siva's abode is Mount Kailas and his consort is the Maid of the Mountain, Parvati. Three-fourths of the Brahmins of India are worshippers of Siva, which would be strange if Siva was originally a Non-Aryan deity. It is also worthy of note that the Siva cult has assumed a special character and pre-eminence in the two extreme ends of India—Kashmir and Dravida. The fact is that the Ramayana in its present form is a historical novel written to celebrate the triumph of a prince and a people by a poet whose literary language was Sanskrit. It is well-known that in Rama's story, as Buddha knew it, the propagandist additions of the present version are absent. The main motive for the Aryan invasion of the South was the same as at the present day—to exploit the labour of an industrious and docile population.*

* In the first South Indian tour of 1919, Poet Tagore interpreted Sri Rama as an Avatar who brought about a racial Synthesis. I have dealt with this subject in a series of three articles on *Tagore in South India* in the I. S. R. 1922. The text of the Ramayana and Mahabharata, extant in Java, differs considerably from ours, says Rabindranath: *Letters from Java*, pp. 335-337, V.Q.Jan.1928. *N.L.*

## INTERNATIONAL HISTORY

I. S. R., *August 25, 1923.*

We have much pleasure in publishing the communication from Mr. F. G. Gould, of the Moral Educational Society, London, relating to the idea of an international history projected at the Moral Educational Congress held at Geneva last year. We have been urging from time to time the need of a synthetic history of India, and we welcome the project of a synthetic history of the nations. Mr. H. G. Wells in his "Outline History of the World" has made a good beginning, but his book is not sufficiently well-informed regarding the movements of Asiatic culture and civilizations. "The international mind," as Professor Butler observes, "is nothing else than that habit of thinking of foreign relations and business, and that habit of dealing with them, which regard the several nations of the civilized world as friendly and co-operating equals in aiding the progress of civilization, in developing commerce and industry, and in spreading enlightenment and culture throughout the world." It is no doubt difficult to develop this international mind if we fix our minds exclusively on contemporary conditions, but it is not difficult to do it if we take a long enough view of history. A mountain range seen at close quarters appears as a number of distinct hills and peaks, and its continuity is recognized only when it is seen at a proper distance. In the same way, what appears to contemporary

observers as antagonisms and conflicts between nations and creeds and parties, is lost in the synthetising perspective of History. A politician can never be the historian of his own period. It is equally difficult for a person with the historical sense to be an ardent politician except by a great effort and from a constraining sense of duty.

## TAGORE IN CHINA

I. S. R., *July 26, 1924.*

A Visva-Bharati bulletin gives a summary of the doings in China in connection with the visit of the Indian Poet, Rabindranath Tagore, which lasted about a month in April and May. The Poet was everywhere received with great honour, by the Chinese, as well as by the representatives of Japan, Britain and America in China. One can see from the excerpts from the English journals published in China on the Poet's visit that British journalists in the Far East are as a class much superior in culture to those in East or South Africa. Their attitude towards Asiatics and their civilization is full of delicate insight and sympathy. The Poet in all his speeches was calling upon China to be true to her Asiatic spirit and ideals. The Chinese did not accept the Poet's compliments to their national culture without question. A few Westernised Chinese were openly hostile to his teaching as calculated to stunt the growth of self-determination and the struggle of the oppressed classes and races. "The so-called spiritual civilization of the Orient," one of them said,

"is nothing more than civil wars, selfish occupations, hypocrisy, rapacity, fraud, vicious royalty, wicked filial respect and the contemptuous habit of foot-binding." But there were finer spirits who questioned the correctness of applying the term materialism to Chinese culture. One of them is Mr. J. Wong-Quincey of the Tsing Hua College, whose letter is printed in the bulletin. He said:

> The word materialism was invented in the West to describe a certain school of thought. It had its exact denotation and connotation and was used against a certain background, the background of Christianity. Take it out of its environment and apply it to a different race with a totally different history and culture and it simply will not fit. The term that will exactly describe the mentality of the Chinese and their attitude to life awaits invention.

The visit of Tagore to China and that of Mrs. Sarojini Naidu to East and South Africa have revealed a new path upon which the East and West can meet with mutual appreciation. For our own part, we should like to see less said of the differences between the two and more of their affinities which are deeper and more numerous. Materialism is a lower creed not because it seems to have a greater fascination for the West but because it is a less true interpretation of the world and of man than the ethical and spiritual. There are many minds in the West to-day which are genuinely solicitous of an intimate understanding with the best in the East which, on her part, should respond to them in right earnest.

## CHINA AND JAPAN

I. S. R., *November 16, 1935.*

Two eminent scholars from China and Japan, now or recently in India, have declared that India is held in high esteem in their countries for the spiritual and cultural benefits derived in ancient times. India, China and Japan constituted a single cultural unit and was known as SAN GOKU. In our own time, Dr. Hu Shih, father of Chinese Nationalism, has founded and is directing the Crescent Moon Society and the Crescent Moon Magazine dedicated to the memory of Dr. Rabindranath Tagore's visit to China. Professor Tan Yun-Shan, in his eloquent and learned lecture* delivered at Shantiniketan, said: "As for the Poet's ideal and hope to unite Asiatic cultures and to revive the Indian and Chinese cultural relationship, all of our Chinese scholars have the sincerest sympathy with him; and our leading scholars and leaders have also cherished for long the same idea and are willing to co-strive for the common goal with joint endeavours. Now is the time for India and China to resume and strengthen their cultural relationship." Professor Yone Noguchi, the famed Japanese Poet, who arrived in Calcutta on Sunday spoke of Japan's friendship for India through Buddhism. India is thus historically cast for the part of mediator between these two great countries but she

*Published in M. R. for November, 1935.

cannot fill that role except as an Asiatic nation acting on her own impulses and instincts. Indian Swaraj will be a poor thing if it does not leave her full freedom to serve the world as peacemaker which her genius and history mark her out to be.

## INDIA, A BUDDHIST NATION

I. S. R., *June 6, 1936.*

Mr. Yonezawa, Consul General in India for Japan, in unveiling the frescoes painted by the Japanese artist, Kosetsu Nasu, in the Mulagandh Vihara, the great Buddhist shrine at Sarnath, near Benares, which stands on the site where Gautama Buddha preached his first sermon, referred to Japan and India as the two great Buddhist nations of the world. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya who presided, endorsed the Consul General's phrase, pointing out that Buddha was regarded as one of the Avatars in Hinduism. Hinduism and Buddhism, he added, were common as they were two branches of the Aryan religion. In his scholarly introduction to his English translation of the Bhagavad Gita, Kashinath Trimbak Telang, drew a parallel between the relation in which Hinduism of the Gita stood to Buddhism and that in which the Brahmoism of RAJA RAM MOHAN ROY stood to the Brahmoism of Keshab Chandra Sen. " Suppose " he said, " our ancestors to have been attached to the ceremonial law of the Vedas, as we are attached to a lifeless ritualism, the Upanishads and

Gita might be, in a way, comparable to movements like that of the late RAJA RAM MOHAN ROY. Standing, as far as possible on the antique ways, they attempt, as RAJA RAM MOHAN ROY attempted in these later days, to bring into prominence and to elaborate the higher and nobler aspects of the old beliefs. Buddhism would be comparable to the further departure from old traditions which was led by Babu Keshab Chander Sen. The points of dissent in the olden times were pretty nearly the same as the points of dissent now. The ultimate motive power also was in both cases identical—a sense of dissatisfaction in its intergrity with what had come down from old times encrusted with the corruption of years. In this view, the old system, the philosophy of the Upanishads and the Gita, and the philosophy of Buddha, constitute a regular intelligible progression." The parallel may be pursued further. The Buddhism which spread to China and Japan was the Mahayana Buddhism which was itself a protest against the earlier Hinayana and its rather neutral not to say negative ideology. The Mahayana conception of the Bodhisattva is not very different from the Gita ideal of the devotee of the Unmanifested, who is intent on the good of all beings. Mahayana Buddhism is analogous to the Vedanta of Swami Vivekananda with its stress on social service as the indispensable concomitant of religion. Vivekananda drew his inspiration from the Brahmo Samaj under Keshab Chander Sen but his Vedanta was also a reaction against Keshab's eclecticism. Just as Mahayana

spread to several countries so the Vedanta of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda school has spread all over the world as the recent celebrations of the Ramakrishna Centenary witness.

Comparing Buddhism with the Gita religion, Telang observed:

> The main points on which Buddha's protest against Brahmanism rests, seem to be the true authority of the Vedas and the true view of caste' On most points of doctrinal speculation Buddhism is still but one aspect of the older Brahminism. The various coincidences to which we have drawn attention show that, if there is need to show it. Well now, on both these points, the Gita, while it does not go the whole length which Buddha goes, itself embodies a protest against the views current about the time of its composition. The Gita, does not, like Buddhism, absolutely reject the Vedas, but it shelves them. The Gita does not totally root out caste. It places caste on a less untenable basis.

As regards the Vedas, there has been practically no difference between the effects of their total rejection by Buddha and their rather supercilious shelving by the Gita. The Vedas ceased to be the foundation of Hinduism, and the Gita with the Upanishads and the Brahma Sutras took their place. As for caste, Buddhism did not quite reject it as Telang, in conformity with popular opinion, holds. Dr. Edward Thomas is more correct when he says:

> The fact of caste was not denied. The Buddhists even formed a rival theory of its origin and placed the warrior

caste, to which Buddha belonged, above the Brahminical. It was only within the Order that the individual lost his 'name and clan.'

The Dhammapada concedes the superiority of the Brahmin but not on the ground of birth but on that of conduct and behaviour which the Gita also makes the criterion of caste. The Gita like Buddhism holds up Nirvana as the supreme goal though it perfers to call it Brahma Nirvana. The parallel goes deeper. The central teaching of the Gita is that each one should elevate his self by meditation on the Supreme Self which abides in him. If he is unable to do this outright, the Gita recommends four steps by which he could discipline himself to the requisite pitch. If he is not able even to adopt them, as a last resource he is advised to dedicate all his action to Sri Krishna and he is assured that peace of mind will immediately follow. This is the germ of the doctrine of salvation by bhakti or faith which we should least expect to meet in the teaching of Buddha. But it is there. The Dhammapada in language almost identical with that of the Gita exhorts the Bhikku: "Rouse thyself by thy Self, examine thyself by thy Self.........Self is the Lord of self. Self is the goal of self." But Bhikkus whose spiritual pinions are not ample enough to sustain them in the rarefied regions of the highest philosophy, are offered the same last resource as that offered by Sri Krishna: "Those who have faith and love towards me are all destined to heaven." The method of the Gita is the method of suggestion: that of the Buddha is

also largely the same but, unlike the Gita, which was left without any agency for implementing it, Buddhism had a great organisation and the help of the State to aid its propagation. Turning from doctrines to practice, the Hindu revival which followed Buddhism, was in large part based on Buddhist teaching. Buddhism was not driven out of India. It has remained in the country of its birth under the parental roof, and with the parental name. The Consul-General was, therefore, right in naming India a Buddhist country. She is that in relation to Japan and other Buddhist countries. Nothing better can happen than that the ancient cultural solidarity of India, China and Japan should be revived. SAN GOKU, the ancient collective name for the three countries, united by their reverence for the Sakyamuni, will be the strongest agency for promoting peace and good-will among the nations of the earth.

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# THE
# SYNTHESIS of INDIAN INDIA

'The heart of India beats in the Native States."

—M. G. RANADE

# A SYNTHETIC VIEW OF INDIAN HISTORY

SIR AKBAR HYDARI.

It will not be the growth, but the death of Indian Nationalism, if the Musalmans of India fail to be impressed by the greatness of Asoka and Chandra Gupta, or filled with pride and joy at the immortal frescoes of Ajanta and the sculptured monuments of Ellora, or fail to derive fresh inspiration from the glorious songs of Jayadev and Tukaram, or find food for deep and satisfying thought in the discourses of Sri Krishna and Gautama Buddha. It will not be the growth but the death of Indian Nationalism, if the Hindus are not filled with pride at the architectural splendours of the Moghuls and the Adilshahis, at the political achievements of great rulers like Sher Shah and Akbar, at the fine heroism of noble queens like Chand Sultana and Nur Jahan, at the liberal statesmanship of devoted Ministers like Mahmood Gawan and Abul Fazl, at the wide learning of scholars like Al Beruni and Faizi or at the inspiration of poets like Amir Khusru and Ghalib. It will be a sad day indeed if the minds of Musalmans and Hindus alike are not stirred with the high and noble aims of Viceroys like Mayo and Ripon, of administrators like Munro and Elphinstone, of friends of India like Fawcett and Bright, of Missionaries like Hare and Miller. For all these and many more, whether Hindu, Musalman or Christian loved India and worked for her.

—December, 1917.

# ALL INDIA JAIN CONFERENCE *

## Mysore Maharaja's Opening Address

Sir Hukumchand and Gentlemen,—Let me first thank you for the cordial welcome which you have given me to-day, and for the warm sentiments which you have expressed towards me in your address. I need not assure you that I deeply appreciate them.

It gives me great pleasure to be with you on a solemn and auspicious occasion like the present when you have assembled in such large numbers from all parts of India for a holy purpose. In welcoming this All-India gathering of Jains to the land of Mysore, I cannot forget that this land is to them a land of pilgrimage, consecrated by some of the holiest traditions and tenderest memories of their faith This picturesque rock on an elevated table-land was, as a thousand years' old tradition has it, the scene where the venerable Bhagavan Srutakevali Bhadrabahu leading the first migration of the Jains to the Southern Peninsula broke his journey through the jungles and took up his abode, and tradition still points to the cave in which years after he passed away, in Sallekhana, leaving his footprints on the rock. It was in this holy land, the Dakshina Kasi, the Benares of the South, that, as the

* Full text of the speech delivered by His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore at the All-India Jain Conference held at Saravana-belagola on March 14, 1925.

same tradition has it, the Mauryan Emperor Chandragupta, the fame of whose prowess turned away the invincible hosts of Alexander the Great, doffing the Emperor's for the ascetic's robe, nursed his master, the Srutakevali, in his last moments and worshipped his footprints. Since that day, many a royal prince of the South and many a holy monk from the North have vowed themselves to death by euthanasia, that Sallekhana which answers to the Samadhi-marana of the Hindu Yogi.

This is also the holy spot sacred to the Muniswara Gomata, whom tradition represents to have been the younger brother of Bharata, the eponymous Emperor of Bharatavarsha. The land of Mysore, therefore, symbolises Gomata's spiritual empire, as Bharatavarsha stands for the empire of his brother Bharata. For a thousand years has the Muniswara's Colossal Statue carved, it may be, out of a huge boulder on the rock and visible for miles around ruled over this scene unsurpassed in massive grandeur and sublimity of spiritual power by anything that the Egyptian or Assyrian monuments can show.

But Jainism not only found a second birth-place and home in Mysore, Jainism repaid the debt. For Jainism, if it did not create our Kannada literature, inspired some of the noblest masterpieces of that literature in its early history; and Jaina learned men have ever since continued to render signal service to it.

No less memorable have been the services of Jainism to the evolution of India's spiritual and philosophical life. Jainism has cultivated certain aspects of that life which have broadened India's religious outlook. It is not merely that Jainism has aimed at carrying Ahimsa to its logical conclusion* undeterred by the practicalities of the world; it is not only that Jainism has attempted to perfect the doctrine of the spiritual conquest of matter in its doctrine of the Jaina,—what is unique in Jainism among Indian religious and philosophical systems is that it has sought emancipation in an upward movement of the spirit towards the realm of infinitude and transcendence,—and that it has made power, will, character, in one word Charitra, an integral element of perfection side by side with knowledge and faith. And Jainism has sought a harmony of all religions, and of all philosophical and dialectical standpoints in its Sarva-dharma and its Anekantavada. At the other end of the scale, in its rock-cut sculptured architecture, Jainism has created a new style, and carried it to a pitch of excellence which places the glories of Mount Abu side by side with the Mausoleum of the Taj (Agra) among the architectural wonders of the world.

But all human things are subject to decay, and your own latter-day history has not been exempted from the operation of this universal law. Fortune, however, is depicted as riding on a wheel; every

* The Jains belong to a sect which has improved on the maxim "Live and let live" and holds that to "Let live" is more important even than to "Live."—I. S. R. 28—3—1915. Compare also the memorable conversation of Mr. C F. Andrews with Gandhiji, in South Africa, on the Heart of Jainism.

descent leads to an ascent; an Ayasarpini period must be followed by an Utsarpini. And to one who has closely watched the signs of the times, it cannot but be evident that a great awakening has come to the Jaina community all over India. You have resolved to bid farewell to all disputes of rival sects which have brought your religious usages and traditions into the purlieus of the Courts of Law. You have resolved no longer to remain a divided house. You have resolved to hark back to the pristine purity of your spiritual doctrine and tenets, and to conform your social organisation to the simple rigour of your faith, and purge it of such of its latter-day accretions as may not be in harmony with the teachings of the Jaina. For these high social and religious ends, you have resolved to pursue an educational propaganda fitted to create the necessary atmosphere and the necessary instruments. You have sought to vindicate the independence of your own system of personal law, and taken your stand on the Bhadrabahu Samhita. And finally, you have resolved to throw open the noble treasures of your great Bhandars to the world's gaze for the world's use, and your publication of the sacred books of Jainism to be crowned by an Ardhamagadhi Lexicon and Encyclopædia, as well as your magazines and periodicals which expound Jaina tenets and traditions, have nobly followed up that noble resolve.

Treading the path of pilgrimage like your ancestors and like your Asiatic brethren of other faiths, you have come here primarily for a religious purpose, but you

have not over-looked the ancient association of religion and life, and have taken advantage of this sacred occasion to hold a Conference of the Jain community. The Conference is, I understand, a purely religious and social one. It will have nothing to do with politics. I commend the wisdom of the promoters on this limitation. Let me not, however, be misunderstood in this commendation as putting politics outside the pale of your consideration, as something to be dreaded or ignored. On the contrary, I feel that every educated person should take an earnest and intelligent interest in the political questions of the day, and contribute his and (I ought, perhaps, to add) her share towards the solution of the problems that must inevitably arise from the necessity of adapting the organisation of humanity to the needs of its expanding consciousness. But you, gentlemen, have assembled here as members of a particular religious community having religious and social problems peculiarly your own. Your purpose is to discuss these problems and to devise means for the progress of your community. On this occasion you are Jains first and Indians afterwards and as such you have every right to your own standpoint and may most fitly discuss therefrom your special needs and aims. But in the sphere of politics, whether concerning India as a whole or any of the areas of which it is composed, you are Indians first and Jains afterwards. As Jains you command the sympathetic interest of every one in looking at the problems of your community from your particular standpoint.

## A Comprehensive View of National Progress

As Indians your political point of view as also the political point of view of every other religious community in India should, in my opinion, be that of India as a whole: So long as the thousand and one different communities into which our country is split up bear this doctrine in mind and act towards one another in a true spirit of brotherhood, we need have no misgivings as to her future. It is when the purely social and religious questions invade politics that vast difficulties arise, difficulties which must inevitably retard the progress of the country. Within the religious and social sphere of each community there can be no real improvement which does not exercise a beneficial effect on the general progress of the country. We must, therefore, wish every community all possible success in its endeavour to advance itself religiously, socially and educationally. At the same time, we must realise that if there is to be real progress in the country at large, it must be all along the line, it must embrace every community and I personally consider it the sacred duty of the more advanced communities not only to have earnest regard for their own progress, but also to extend a helping hand to less fortunate communities which, from some remediable cause, are lagging in the path of human evolution.

I wish this Conference all possible success. In Sir Hukumchand you have a President of whom you have every reason to feel proud and I have no doubt

that his advice and guidance will be of inestimable value to you all. His example should be a stimulus to the younger members of your community, and I trust there are many who will endeavour to follow in his footsteps.

Gentlemen, I thank you once again for your address and for the cordial sentiments you have expressed, and I wish you all ever-increasing prosperity.

## CHURCH AND STATE IN INDIA

I. S. R., *April 16, 1927*

The Maharaja of Mysore, in declaring open a new mosque built at the cost of the State for his Mahomedan subjects in the capital city, glanced at the communal differences between the followers of the two majority creeds in British India. "It has been a real sorrow to me," said His Highness, "to see lately, in different parts of India great clashes over the externals of religion, showing, if they show nothing else, a tendency to pursue the shadow rather than the substance." This is not the first mosque which the Maharaja has opened. Some years ago, he had one constructed in Bangalore for Musalman soldiers of the State. The Maharaja in the course of his speech stated the principle which justified his action in thus providing for the religious worship of his Musalman subjects. He said:

Religion plays a great part in the lives of all us, Indians, and though we worship God in many and various ways, there is a unity in our diversity and all our ways, if properly pursued, lead sooner or later to the same eternal truths.

We have been recently reading Muir's *Life of the Prophet of Islam* and, making allowance for the author's bias, it is easy to see that the eternal truths which Mahomed proclaimed do not in any way conflict with those proclaimed by other Teachers and Prophets. Gautama Buddha and Jesus Christ were content to leave their great messages to work out their influence on the social and political conditions of their times. Mahomed, in the circumstances of his time and country, was obliged to take upon himself the task of reforming his secular as well as his religious environment. Much of the misunderstanding prevailing among non-Mussalmans, is due to their confounding His methods as a social reformer and statesman with His message as a religious Teacher. Bergson has pointed out that life itself has to imitate for a time the inertness of matter in order to be able to influence matter. This is true equally of the way in which religion enters into and modifies its social and political environment.

The Maharaja's remarks embody the ancient Indian doctrine of the relation of the State to the Church. That relation is not one of severe toleration or armed neutrality but one of sympathy and protection. Religion being an essential of national life, all religions, as different manifestations of the religious spirit, which His Highness called the substance, are entitled to the support and protection of the State whatever the personal creed of the monarch may be. Our communal difficulties are largely owing to the fact that we have departed from this fundamental principle of Indian polity. Rapson has shown how every rule in India which did not conform to this principle has been a failure. The most successful

Mussalman rulers assimilated it and made it an integral part of their policy. Those who failed to do so or deliberately set it at naught invariably and inevitably came to grief. It is not easy for statesmen brought up in the European tradition to understand this principle. It is unthinkable, for instance, that the King of England would dare to open a Roman Catholic Church even in these days when nearly all the disabilities of His Majesty's Catholic subjects have been removed. There is an interesting chapter in the ex-Kaiser's *Memoirs* (1878—1918) headed "My relations with the Church," in which he describes his endeavours to secure equal treatment for his Catholic subjects. He told His Holiness the Pope in the course of an interview that he considered it to be the duty of a Christian sovereign to care for his subjects to the best of his ability, irrespective of creed:

I could assure him that, during my reign, everybody could profess his religion without interference and fulfil his duties to his ecclesiastical overlord; that this was a fundamental principle of my life from which I should not swerve.

The ex-Kaiser writes that very early in his reign he resolved "in the interests of national welfare to work with a view to creating a *modus vivendi* that would make it possible for people professing the two creeds to live peacefully with each other." This, be it remembered, was less than fifty years ago. Only eighty years ago, Palmerston was pleading with his Tiverton Dissenters for civilised treatment of Irish Catholics. He told them:—

To proselytize the Irish people and to convert them to Protestantism is, in the existing state of things, impossible.

Our only choice is between leaving six millions of men in comparative ignorance, and in consequent bigotry and superstition, or endeavouring to enlighten them, and at least to make them good Catholics if we cannot make them Protestants; and in making this choice, we must not forget, as some men in their zeal seem to do, that Roman Catholics are Christians.

Surely, it is not for Europeans, much less for Englishmen, to taunt Hindus and Mahomedans for their religious bigotry. We have to learn many things from the West but not religious toleration.

There are many ingenious politicians in India engaged in finding clever formulas to compose Hindu-Mahomedan differences. But there is one formula which does not seem to have attracted their notice. Some member of the Legislative Assembly might move a resolution pledging the Government of India to a policy of State support to all religions. That is the only way in which the State can expect all religious communities to co-operate in a common citizenship. The West has glossed over its deep religious differences by making exploitation of Asiatic and African races and Mammon worship as the goal and purpose of its civilisation. So long as the West has the free run of Asia and Africa this semblance of unity among its nations will continue. Every check in these regions will let loose the disruptive forces which lie very near the surface of Western civilisation. India cannot, like the West, put aside religion as being outside the concern of the State. What concerns the people, concerns the State. The secular State superimposed on a people so inveterately religious as the Hindus and Mahomedans, is an impossibility. We have no doubt whatever that the first thing

that a really national Government in this country, will do is to extend equal protection to all religions, Hinduism and Mahomedanism, Christianity, Judaism and Zoroastrianism. The communal problem will immediately cease to exist because it will be the duty of the State to remove all occasions of communal differences and to exert its influence unintermittently to create sympathy and understanding between all the religious communities of India. Mysore has given a lead in this important matter which British India will do well to follow.

## RELIGION AND THE STATE

I. S. R., *June 13, 1931*

The attitude of the National Congress to religion is indicated in the clause in the resolution on "Fundamental Rights" purporting to secure to every citizen "freedom of conscience and the free profession and practice of religion, subject to public order and morality." It is also laid down that "neutrality" is to be the State's attitude towards religion. Mahatma Gandhi in introducing the Karachi resolution explained it to mean that

> Swaraj will favour Hinduism no more than Islam, nor Islam more than Hinduism. But in order that we may have a State based on religious neutrality, let us from now adopt the principle in our daily affairs and let not a Hindu merchant hesitate to have deserving Muslims as his employees and let every Congressman make religious neutrality his creed in every walk of life.

If this is what the resolution means, there is nothing in it to which exception can be taken. The State is not to remain aloof from but to "favour" religion, but no one more than another, Individual citizens in their business

relations are to set a wholesome example by not discriminating against persons on the score of religion. The pith of the matter is that, according to Mahatmaji's explanation, the State is not to "boycott" religion. It must look with an equal eye on all religions professed by its citizens. This is in perfect accord with Mahatmaji's character and it is the traditional Indian policy, still recognised more or less in the Indian States.

Neutrality, however, is hardly the right word to describe that policy. That word correctly represents the attitude defined in the Nehru Report* when it laid down that the State as such should make no endowment to any religion either directly or indirectly. That is also the policy followed by most of the European States and it rightly represents the position which religion occupies in the life and thought of Western races. But the place of religion in the life of the people of India is entirely different and the policy of the National State should correspond to it. There is a group of Indian politicians who would like the Indian attitude to religion to be transformed to what it is in Europe. This may or may not be a good thing, but the political constitution of the country should not be made an instrument of anti-religious propaganda. Indian civilisation as compared with western civilisation is poor in material achievement but it has better conserved spiritual values, because it is rooted in religion. Sir Bampfylde Fuller, recording his impressions of the United States, is disconcerted by the supremacy of wealth in the great Republic. He reflects:

In India, I have seen a local millionaire drive through his town absolutely unnoticed, although he had an English

*I. S. R., September 1, 1928.

coachman, whereas, when a Hindu or Mahomedan "saint" passed, almost naked, along the street, there was not a shopkeeper who did not rise and salute him. In America —and with us at the present day—the case is exactly contrary.

It is obvious that this did not strike the ex-Indian official as quite an improvement on the Indian point-of-view. But this is not all. The clause which ensures freedom of conscience to the citizens also gives the State the power to set up a moral code independent of religion. In fact it postulates that religion is likely to be antagonistic to morality and that the State has an infallible instinct to judge what is moral and what is immoral. We do not think that such a pretension has ever been put forward anywhere outside British India. Our Christian rulers could not accept the religions of India as having a moral basis. The National Congress has adopted their attitude without understanding its real significance. Does any Hindu or Mahomedan, Jain or Buddhist, Jew or Parsi, admit that his religion sanctions practices contrary to morality and that the State is more competent to undertake responsibility for the morality of the citizens?

The traditional Indian policy of uniting the State and Religion in the closest bonds resulted not only in creating sympathy between the rulers and the ruled but it also strengthened the foundations of the State. Under the proposed scheme religion will develop its speculative aspect while the State will flounder in just those matters which affect most deeply the lives of the citizens. There is another consideration which cannot be too forcibly urged. The subjects of a secular State, and this is very much the case in India, will of necessity owe it a divided allegiance. Religion here rouses such intensity of feeling

that it is almost dangerous for a Government to lose touch with it. The more so in a Federal Constitution where religious organisations will command a wider appeal than the State which to the majority will probably be too dim and distant an entity to arouse interest or enthusiasm. Religious rivalry may well increase, communal distrust under such conditions will assuredly flourish and, instead of harmonising the relations of communities, a secular State will introduce more discord. The Congress has dealt with the issue in a very perfunctory manner and it has not taken pains to study the history and traditions of this country. Religious neutrality is an impossible attitude for the Indian National State to take up. In practice it will infallibly work out to supporting reactionary forces in religion and society as the experience of British India amply demonstrates. It is inconceivable to the average European that a State can be the Protector of several religions. Not a little of the primitive idea of a jeolous God has inhered in the Western concept of religion and whenever a State was associated with religion, it was with only one—Catholic or Protestant. But the Indians many centuries ago thought of religions in a very different way, as so many different pathways to salvation. Hence it has been not only possible but necessary in this country for the State to be the protector of all religions. This is no mere theory. It has been practised in many States as a matter of tradition, and is being systematized to-day in Mysore where an orthodox Hindu Maharaja and his Moslem Minister* are working out the synthesis which alone can ensure communal harmony in the country.

* Sir Mirza Ismail, Dewan of Mysore.

## THE NIZAM'S APPEAL

I. S. R., *May 31, 1930.*

His Exalted Highness the Nizam has issued a public manifesto. The Nizam is known to be a kind-hearted ruler.* He appeals to his countrymen to join together to find a solution of India's difficulties in a form of Government for the future that will command the support of all reasonable men of every creed and every party. We are often told that there should be no interference on the part of British India in the internal affairs of Indian States or of the latter in that of British India. That such a water-tight division is impracticable is well illustrated by the Nizam's manifesto. His Exalted Highness has already announced that he will be represented at the Round Table Conference, and the Conference will have in Sir Akbar Hydari† a representative of outstanding character and all-India reputation to speak for the premier Indian State. But, as the Nizam rightly says, the Conference can be a success only if all the creeds and parties co-operate in the presentation of their respective cases in an atmosphere of friendliness and good-will.

*Under the special authority of H. E. H. The Nizam, the immortal frescoes of *Ajanta* have been published by the Oxford University Press, 1931-34. Ajanta is in the north-west of Hyderabad, (Deccan) about forty miles from the railway station. H. E. H. The Nizam has given a big donation for a chair of Islamic Studies in Tagore's International University or Visva-Bharati.

† Sir Akbar is the well-known Finance Minister and veteran educationist. The Osmania University has cut new ground in educational reform.

## SIR P. PATTANI ON FEDERATION

I. S. R. *June 6, 1931.*

An interview with Sir Prabhashankar Pattani, at Bardoli where he has been on a visit to Mahatma Gandhi, on the question of Federation, was published in the *Free Press Journal* of the 2nd June. Sir Prabhashankar was a member of the States' delegation to the Round Table Conference, and can speak of what happened there with as much knowledge as any other member. It is, therefore, reassuring to see that he has no misgivings regarding the attitude of the Princes. He is certain that, having accepted the principle of Federation, they will in time accept the full implications of the Federal ideal. The States, he pointed out, have a distinctive function and played an important part in the preservation of ancient Indian culture. We wish this was true of all or most of the States as it is of a few. ...With great respect to the veteran statesman,¶ we fail to see any comparison between the States and the communal problem. The advice that Hindus should concede Muslim demands for the sake of national peace, it may interest him to know, is resented by intelligent and educated Mussalmans who do not appreciate being treated like spoilt children. They do not want anything beyond what they consider essential to their cultural

¶ The Bhavnagar State, of which Sir P. Pattani is the Minister, has given a lead by introducing total prohibition, and by liquidating agricultural indebtedness.

and religious security, and they are prepared and, indeed, anxious to have these settled by open discussion before all the world.

## THE TIME LAG

I. S. R. *June 6, 1931.*

Speaking at the banquet of the Institute of Journalists in London, Mr. Bernard Shaw spoke of "the time lag" as being the great difficulty in adapting institutions to their environment. He explained what he meant by the phrase with reference to himself. "Nature" he said, "has so constituted me that when a thing happens I perceive it has happened. Most people take twenty years to realise it." The reason for this slowness is that events originate as ideas in the human mind, so that it may be said that events happen psychologically long before they are manifest as phenomena. Now, to our mind, the Federation of British India with the States was consummated the very moment that the word was pronounced at the Round Table Conference. The minds of the people of the two Indias rushed towards and mingled with each other, so that to-day there is only one India psychologically though there may be two or even two hundred politically.$ No power on earth can prevent this new birth in the Indian mind from growing and manifesting

$ Mr. K. Natarajan's pamphlet, *Unification or Federation?* is available at the office of the I. S. R., Bandra, Bombay. Also compare *Empire or federation?* I. S. R. 9—2—1935.

itself on the political plane. We are, therefore, content to wait in patience for the event which is now inevitable. The Indian States Conference will do well to frame its proceedings in a spirit of confidence which is the spirit of moderation. The victory having been won almost without a struggle, our efforts should now be directed to making it easy and pleasant for those who have now the reins of power to hand them over to responsible ministers with the least dislocation of existing arrangements.

## MYSORE FINANCE

I. S. R., *June 6, 1931*.

Mysore is perhaps the only State in India which has adopted the sound principle of not taking from the people in any year much more than what is needed for the expenditure in that year and of meeting capital expenditure on public works whose benefits are spread over many generations, by public loans and not from current revenue. This is in itself a proof of the stage to which Mysore has advanced in constitutionalism. Mr. Stanley Rice in his *Life of the Maharaja Gaekwar* explains why this rational method is not followed more generally in the States. "Where everything depends upon the idiosyncracies of one man," he writes, "investors are likely to be shy, and even though the particular despot might be of the benevolent type with rational ideas of the value of State money, there was no guarantee that his successor would not turn out to be

thriftless and extravagant." This should convince Princes and Ministers who are inclined to regard the Subjects' demand for constitutional rights as a culpable repudiation of natural rights of allegiance, that it is much more than that, being intimately connected with sound finance which is the basis of all good government.

## HINDU SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT

I. S. R., *April 11, 1931.*

Mr. K. P. Jayaswal, the distinguished Hindu scholar and jurist of Patna, delivered a remarkable address on the problem of "Adjustment of our Social Institutions to Modern Conditions" before His Highness the Maharaja Gaekwar at Baroda on the 3rd March. The address was arranged as a part of the celebrations on the occasion of the Jubilee of the Maharaja's accession and opened fittingly with a heartfelt tribute to the striking lead which Baroda under Sayaji Rao has given in the past in adapting Society and the State to modern conditions. Mr. Jayaswal referred to the legislation against child marriage, compulsory education, the regulations regarding the exercise of the priestly function among Hindus and other measures of uplift which the Maharaja introduced in his State. Mr. Jayaswal accorded to the Maharaja the credit of having been the first to associate his subjects in administration. Baroda, however, has allowed other States, notably those of South India, to outstrip her in constitutional progress.

Sir Henry Maine showed that the belief in the unchanging East had no foundation in fact. The East has changed and was changing. But he held, that while changes in the East and, in fact, over the greater part of

the world were the outcome of circumstances, only in the north-west corner of Europe were they due to a conscious desire for progress. Maine's knowledge of Indian history was not profound and, indeed, few Indians at that time were better informed in respect of Indian Social Evolution. Thanks chiefly to the pioneer work of Western scholars, the history of India's past became an object of study by Indian scholars of whom Mr. Jayaswal himself is a conspicuous example. As the result of his fuller knowledge, he is able to say that we have a nearly complete record for the last three thousand years of wilful, conscious changes in Hindu society. Mr. Jayaswal cited instances reaching back to the Vedic period of such conscious adjustment to new conditions. The Indian Aryans, he pointed out, at a very early time took into their social and political system non-Aryan races like Andhras.

The other Aryan communities did not let the foreigner into their social system: there he remained a slave or a barbarian, that is, outside the precincts of Aryan society.$

The great reformer who brought about this reform was, according to Mr. Jayaswal, Visvamitra whose achievement is recorded in the myth which credits him with having created a new heaven. When the caste system grew and threatened to become a danger to society, a succession of thinkers, culminating in Gautama Buddha, sounded the alarm. Gautama, said Mr. Jayaswal, threw open the fourth or *sanyas* ashram which had been confined to Brahmans till then, to all castes including Sudras. We may now think that this was not a great gain to the Sudras. But we must judge each age by its own

$ See p. 61 and compare footnote on p. 25.

ideas, and in Buddha's time there could have been no more striking assertion of the spiritual equality of all men than the admission, not merely in theory but in practice, of the lowest castes to the highest religious status, till then a monopoly of the priestly caste. As a fact, this reform had a tremendous effect on the social system. Intermarriages between the castes became common. Mr. Jayaswal thinks that this reform was first obstructed and then obliterated by the lawyers who would not give the same rights to the children of intermarriages as to those of inter-caste marriages. With great respect to his scholarship, we doubt if there has ever been a case of a social custom being abrogated by the fiat of legal commentators. The jurist is a member of society and draws his inspiration from the ideas prevalent in contemporary society. He is really its mouthpiece for formulating rules which accord with the social intelligence of his contemporaries.

Mr. Jayaswal holds that many of the restrictive customs and conventions of caste were thrown up as a means of self-preservation during the Mahomedan period. The object of these, according to him, was to show to the Mussalman ruler that his political power did not imply social ascendancy. Says Mr. Jayaswal:

That was the then reply to the programme of inter-marriages between Hindus and Mussalmans. Social intercourse with Muslims was penalised by perpetual outcasting. Hindu society in self-preservation adopted this rigid rule, which was not only unknown to its Sastras but was opposed to its previous history and its previons practice. If the Hindu of Muslim India did not do it, if he did not make these new tacit laws for himself, he would have been totally lost, lost like the

Buddhists of Java, lost like the Parsis of Persia, and the Buddhists of Central Asia.

The Hindu law-giver, then, was acting with a single eye to the preservation of society when he prompted these restrictions. Why should we suppose that he was less mindful of its interests and was actuated by selfish motives before the advent of the Muslim power? To our thinking, the decline of Hindu society began and was in process before the advent of the Mahomedans, which, indeed, was made possible by the disintegration of the State and Society. The fact that caste restrictions are more rigid in the South where the Muslim influence was practically negligible, shows that they were not primarily due to the fear of being absorbed by Islam. Mr. Jayaswal's picture of Muslim rule is one-sided. After a short time, Muslim rulers realised that religious toleration was the first condition of their existence. This became an integral part of State policy and when it was departed from, it brought down the Moghul Empire.

Mr. Jayaswal's ideal of future Hindu society is of intense interest. He pictures it as freed from caste and other retarding influences, and as assimilating the other communities including the Mussalmans. There should be one code of civil law for all inhabitants of India, based on the principle of equality.

To build up one nation, one society, to be just to every member of society, every citizen of the State, we must have one and the same law for everybody. Religion is a matter of personal faith. Rights should be the affair of Society and the State. Religion should cease to dictate laws.

The term, Hindu, he pleads, should include every man and woman permanently residing in Hindu land or India. Hinduism effected the great synthesis of Aryan and Dravidian civilizations. The next step is to achieve an even greater synthesis of Hindu, Islamic and Christian civilizations. He holds up to Hindu India a lofty ideal.

## RELIGION IN A CHANGING WORLD*

(BY H. H. THE MAHARAJA GAEKWAR)

I am deeply sensible of the honour you have done me in calling me to open this great conference.

It is, I think, a tribute to my ancient Mother India, truly a Grand-Mother of Religions; and I am a Great Grand-Father many times so; perhaps I may address you in words which come out of a long life's experience.

This is a great time to be alive.

"Once more mankind has struck its tents; humanity is on the march;" said General Smuts two years ago; and every passing month makes the world more significant. But does mankind know whither it is going?

We are in an age of ferment and chaos—but also of transition and awakening. As Lord Irwin said to us in India "we need a change of soul." This is true not only in India. Science has united the world, but

*Opening address at the Second World Parliament of Religions, Chicago, September, 1933. Swami Vivekananda took part in the first Parliament of Religions held at Chicago in 1893.

it is divided socially, economically and politically. Can religion accomplish its spiritual, and therefore its cultural, unification? Or, to put this in a catchword, "Man has become smarter, can he become more decent?" Can he change the furniture of his mind to suit the new world in which he finds himself? Can he rise to a new scale of values? He can weigh and analyse the farthest planet—can he organise the one he lives on?

He needs religion to inspire and to instruct him—but if religion is not to be a hindrance it must put its own house in order.

May we not say that it needs first "decoding" that the modern man may understand it, and then "debunking" that the modern man may respect it.

Every great religious movment starts by this transvaluation and translation into the vernacular. Buddha transformed Brahminism by emphasizing the human values, and by talking as the people talked. To-day we need to redefine much. India has its superb definition of the Godhead-*Sat Chit Anand*-reality, mind, bliss. But these words are used in so transcendental a sense that all human values become relative. We need to insist that the Absolute expresses himself in time and space, that the world we live in is real; that the mind that knows it is of the same essence as the mind that planned it, the mind of a Mathematician and a Poet; and still more that our bliss is His bliss, our sorrow His sorrow. God is reality then, and mind and joy; and the world is His Garment, His thought,

His means of expressing His joy in creation. We blaspheme Him if we call it Maya, Illusion: and I assure you we are not all Shankaras and Mystics in India. We have had our Materialists even, and many many Realists. If we have no Woolworth Towers or Chicago fairs, we have our Gwallior Forts and Delhi Mosques. If we do not worship the Dollar, we talk much of pice. The real practical Indian mind has been prevented by over-subtlety; but our great laymen, Sakyamuni, Krishna, Gandhi and our humble saints, Kabir, Tukaram, Tulsidas, have given us what, I believe, you call Horse-sense, and called us back to reality, and to the Human values. These are the pratical idealists of India.

Our Indian Ethic, great in its recognition of the four stages in life, and of a duty for each class in the community, has been stultified by the emphasis on Maya, by the selfishness of Brahmins, by the hardening of class into caste, and by the dominance of the priestly and the world-denying Groups. To-day Ethics are asking religion; "What can be more real than goodness—more saintly than service?"

The real mind of India is re-asserting itself, and "Shudra" is to-day becoming not a term of reproach but an honourable title—and "Mahatma" implies friend of the poor. "Our great soul" must be also "Great Heart."

Man must work for mankind *in* the world, not out of it: He must take his place gladly and frankly "at the festival of life," as our Poet (Tagore) says.

To do a man's work in an unselfish spirit is to find God, says the Gita.

It is men of such spirit that have built up "this brave new world" But through self-will—Trishna or Tanha—we are wrecking it, as the Gita and Buddha insist.

The men of science, the Doctors, the Engineers, the Social Reformers, the Religious Seers, these are making all things new—Fellow-workers with God; but selfishness, race-hatred, narrow nationalism and greed have thrown all into chaos.

Yet a new cosmos is emerging: God is at work. He is a Democratic King, and asks our help. He recognizes no Hierarchy but that of service. "He that is greatest, let him be the servant of all." He *is* greatest who serves most.

Democracy means also the emergence of the common man, and his rights, the demand of the backward peoples for a place in the sun. And alike in East and West, Tyranny and Humbug are challenged, for they deny these rights.

We in Asia see that Race-prejudice may yet destroy the Commonwealth, that caste has been so perverted that it has brought India low. Once a matter of economic division of function, it is now a net-work of tabus, and varying degrees of untouchability are the outcome. All Indian patriots—Brahmins and Kshatriyas leading—must roll away this reproach.

For to-day the emphasis is on personality, and caste which denies the right of every man to rise to his full stature, began with a ringing affirmation that from the Great Being's own person all the castes arose — for mutual service. This Purusha-Sukta is recited daily at every Vaishnavite altar; but poetry has stiffened into prose, and a divine sanction is found for irreligious and immoral tabus. Where the hymn says that Brahmins were the mouthpiece it has been interpreted to mean that they are the brain.

The hymn insists that society is an organism—and as in the body, one organ is as important as another. Our present rigid caste system (which has grown up partly as a natural growth, but largely as an unnatural one) denies this, and it must go; we too desire that any boy or girl may rise to the highest rank. "Shall the foot say to the hand, or the brain to the heart, I have no need of these?" There is no higher or lower, all are servants. All over the world, religion is being challenged by the developing ethical ideals of mankind; religion that is un-ethical is a curse, not a boon. Yet religion is needed and will survive—for man is incurably religious. If there were no God, he would invent one. He is incurably inquisitive. If there were no First Cause, he would find one.

Religion is more than such quests. It is a cry for life, a yearning for reality, a demand for loyalty. Man needs a simple, strong, sincere and serene faith. He needs a rousing call to forget self and to triumph over sense.

Christianity calls men to crucify the lower self. But it is paralysed by the snobbery and colour-bar of Christians. It can do much if it revives its true fundamentals, love of a loving God, and love of men who are brothers.

We in India affirm that all creatures are one; but we have lost our sense of proportion. We spare malarial mosquitoes and plague bearing rats, but we bear heavily on the human family and do harm to millions of our fellow men. We must pray to be led back from the unreal to the real, from darkness to light, from exaggeration to balance. There is no God higher than truth. No beauty without harmony.

What can true religion do? It is the pursuit of absolute values: And so it can insist that in an age of transition and chaos, certain values such as faith, hope, love, certain great principles such as partnership and self-sacrifice, abide. Religion is also the quest for reality and life: it must get rid of shams, and the dead hand of tradition and tabu, if it is to live and to be real. Again it must express itself simply and clearly, so that the way-faring man and the needy masses see it as bread and not a stone: it must remember the poor and the ignorant.

Perhaps the greatest problems of our time are peace and employment. Can religion cut at the roots of war, greed, exploitation, and at the roots of poverty and unemployment? Can scientific and religious man organise this planet as a unity? Can he ration the raw

materials of the world in the interest of our common humanity? If so, and only if so, he can achieve peace, and set the hungry millions to work.

Our economic and political problems are ethical and spiritual problems. For man is spirit and cannot live by bread alone. What shall he give in exchange for his soul?

I quote these great sayings of Jesus, whom all religions honour: We can all unite in "the Lord's prayer," in the beatitudes, and in the Parable of the lost son. And each religion knows that it too has a word in season, and a contribution to the well-being of personality and of humanity at large. We in India remember our ancient and ever-renewed quest for reality and light—even when we remind ourselves that we must find it not in some vague Absolute, but in life here and now.

We remember our insistence on *Ahimsa*—Non-injury—even as we re-define it, and realise that exploitation and frustration are themselves injury, and that the innocent is one who does good, not merely one who refrains from doing evil.

China, too, with her strong sense of human values, begins to remember the poor man, and to enlarge her idea of brotherhood: Not only "All within the four seas," but all men everywhere are brothers. Mandarins and Brahmins no less than capitalists and imperialists have forgotten this human brotherhood. In it lies the

solution of most of our problems. We have a common fatherhood. Nature of God has made of one blood all nations, and the religions believe that He is making the world a neighbourhood: We must realize who is our neighbour. Jesus said that he who acts like one is the real neighbour. Buddha said that he who acts nobly is the nobleman. Confucius said that the true gentleman is at home in any society. To-day we may learn from all. God is ploughing deep furrows, that the seed may make an effective growth. He is making all things new, that righteousness may flourish and war cease, and the world become one.

You are wise and far-sighted in organising this federation of faiths. Let each put its own house in order, and let each bring out of its treasury things new and old for the healing of the nations. What better expresses the spirit we need than the saying of the Chinese mystic twenty-five centuries ago: Activity without Assertiveness; Production without Possessiveness; Direction without Domination; this is very Christian, and we in India claim that we are by nature akin to the Christian ideal; we also acknowledge that Christ has challenged us to make our religion simpler and better.

You who call yourselves by the name of Christ, may also learn from many who do not, not only from the august company of the great teachers but from present day leaders of the Asiatic Renaissance. Let us humbly and in the spirit of partnership combine against

the common enemies, ignorance, selfishness and materialism. Religions may differ but religion is one.

If we are servants of God's creation, we are His friends and fellow-workers. In bearing one another's burdens we become partners in His bliss.

To Him be the Honour and Glory.*

## NIZAM ON RELIGIOUS TOLERATION

I. S. R. *October 14, 1933.*

The following important *firman* has been issued by His Exalted Highness the Nizam in a Gazette Extraordinary:

Because I feel it necessary in order that certain of my personal acts and observances may not be misconstrued by the public or that ignorant and unscrupulous persons by colouring and distorting facts alter their meaning, I wish to make this point clear that what my family religion and personal belief are needs no explanation at this place, for they are well-known. But leaving these aside, I, as a ruler, possess another religion which can be termed as universal peace, for under my protection are followers of various religions and sects, the preservation of whose places of worship has for a long time been the principle of my State. Therefore, I do not desire that religious feelings of any community or sect should be hurt because of prejudice, nor do I wish to be so engrossed in my own religion as to allow it to be called bigotry. Therefore, it has been my own precept and that of my

*I. S. R. 4. 11. 1933.

forbears to regard all religions of the world without differentiation and distinction and not to prejudice our authority by interfering in religious observances of any one (unless such observance appeared likely to endanger the general peace or threatened to lead to disgraceful acts in public), but to earn good reputation by treating all alike. If in spite of this elaboration some dense persons should misconstrue my attitude, it will be regarded as a fault of their short-sightedness. In conclusion I wish to end this explanation with the sentence that in view of the second aspect I consider myself without a religion. That is not to say "no God" like the atheist but "no God but God and Mohammed as His Prophet" on which belief I and my predecessors have prided, will pride ourselves and I trust by grace of the Almighty my posterity will pride itself.

## THE NEED OF THE HOUR

I. S. R. *January 4, 1936.*

...The great post-Buddhist Acharyas whose commentaries on the *Bhagavad Gita* form the bases of all present-day sects of Hinduism, were keen on establishing their own philosophic ideas and paid scant heed to the social implications of the *Gita* doctrines. This omission is responsible for the arrest of social evolution. A society which does not go forward must retrograde. There is no standing still.

What are the social implications of the religion of the Gita? In the first place it wipes the slate clear of the discriminations against women and Sudras which, at sometime, somehow, crept into the Vedic religion. It goes further and enjoins non-discrimination against the

lowest of outcastes who eat dog's flesh. The entire teaching is clinched by the declaration that the Supreme Being dwells in all, that all, to use the words of St. Paul, live and move and have their being in Him. Worship of God is divested of ritual and priestly intervention. Whoever offers in a spirit of devotion, a leaf, a flower, fruit, is assured of Divine grace. Even the worst sinner need not despair. The moment he experiences devotion to the Supreme being that moment he is regenerated. Steps are suggested by which one incapable even of a slight effort at self-purification, can gradually train himself to do so. The profound psychology of the *Gita* is borne out by the discoveries during the last few years of the modern science of psycho-analysis. A broad tolerance pervades the whole teaching. No exclusive claim is made for the worship even of the God of the *Gita.* All who worship in the spirit of Truth their own accustomed Deity are assured of the same goal. Not only that, but even those who do not worship a personal God but are engaged in promoting the well-being of all creatures, they also have an honoured place in the religion of the *Gita.* In fact, the *Gita* seems to hold them in special honour but it recommends the worship of a personal God as being more easy for the average man. If it was not the Buddhists and Jains who were referred to, it must have been some earlier school from which they sprang. Turning to more concrete matters, while the *Gita* dwells on the effect of diet on temperament, it does not attach any similar importance to the company in which one dines. Its conception of caste is the complete antithesis of what caste has come to be. It is not a matter of birth but of qualities, aptitudes. The abolition of caste will no more imperil Hinduism than the abolition of the

House of Lords would imperil Christianity or even the Church of England. In the field of politics, the *Gita*, without prescribing forms of Government, lays down a canon, conformity of which is the final and absolute test of what government should be. For the individual the pursuit of the law of his being, *sva dharma*, is the highest duty.* The highest duty of the State is the securing for every one of its subjects of freedom and facilities to grow to the full height of his stature, and that which does this best is the best.

If Hinduism is reformed as to accord with the simple and sane implications of the Gita, it will become not only powerful within itself but will also eliminate the communal dissensions between Hindus and non-Hindus. The adaptation of Hinduism to *Gita* principles will not only help India to solve her internal problems. It will also help her to fulfil her mission to the world. In its present distracted state, the West¶ is looking to India and to the Bhagavad Gita in particular, for guidance. In his brilliant book *The Spirit of France*, Paul Cohen-Portheim wrote that what would save civilisation at the present-day is the co-operation of Asia and Europe—not the Asia of to-day which has almost forgotten its own wisdom and is imitating much of what is worst in Europe, but the Asia of the *Bhagavad Gita* and the Buddha. The identification of the *Gita* and the Buddha by this French writer, shows remarkable insight. The goal of the *Gita* is Brahma Nirvana. Whether the Brahma was added on by the *Gita*

* Sister Nivedita's book, *Religion and Dharma* (Longmans, Green and Co.)

¶ Poet Rabindranath Tagore in his first paper in the very first Section of this symposium lays emphasis on this trend.

or dropped out by Buddha is a question of chronology. The identity of several sentiments and even phrases in the *Gita* and the *Dhamma pada* is remarkable. The West in its search for light has already turned its attention to the *Bhagavad Gita*. †Schweitzer's judgment of the *Gita* was quoted in a review of his latest book in *Hibbert Journal* for July: "It is not merely the most read but also the most idealized book in world literature." The *Bhagavad Gita** is thus India's great medium for communion with the world outside. The socialization of its teaching would be her greatest service to humanity. Since the above was written we have perused in the *Times of India* the summary of a thoughtful and scholarly lecture delivered by His Highness the Maharaja of Baroda. As International President of the World Fellowship of Faiths, His Highness is in a unique position to inaugurate a movement to bring Hinduism back to the *Gita* and Buddha, as a great step towards making her full contribution to the problems which confront humanity.

† Dr. Albert Schweitzer is a great missionary in darkest Africa. Please see valuable notes by Mr. C. F. Andrews in my Section on the "World's Unborn Soul."

*"How much more admirable the Bhagavad-Gita than all the ruins of the East!" Thoreau's *Walden*, p. 49. (Everyman's Library)

"Let us now go back and supply minute criticisms to it, but cherish the venerable oracle." Read Emerson's *Brahma* (SONG OF THE SOUL) in "Emerson's Debt to the Orient," V. Q. p. 362, Jan. 1928.

# INDIAN STATES AND FEDERATION

I. S. R. *December 19, 1936.*

The memorable Proclamation of the Maharaja of Travancore* throwing open temples under State management to worshippers of all classes and communities of Hindus, formally aligns Travancore with Mysore, Baroda and some smaller States on the side of progressive social activities in the future Federation. Hyderabad, too, especially since the advent of Her Highness the Princess of Berar and under her influence, is showing marked tendencies in the same direction. His Exalted Highness the Nizam himself has spoken in public strongly against the seclusion of women and in favour of women's education which is the mainspring of social progress. The apprehension felt by social reformers regarding the possible retarding influence of the States in the Federation, is giving place, as the result of these and similar circumstances, to confidence that they will prove to be valuable factors in the initiation and administration of measures of social uplift and amelioration. Experience has shown that the States are able, under wise rulers and administrators, to judge accurately how, when and what great social measures can be introduced and carried out with the acceptance of the people. §

* Travancore: Its area is 7,625 squire miles, its population is 5,090,452.

§ See the next Section on removal of the two blots on Hinduism; namely, the Devadasi system and the curse of Untouchability. It is to be carefully borne in mind that in the Indian States, the Maharanis have, as a rule, initiated the great measures of Reformation.

# REMOVAL OF

# THE TWO BLOTS ON HINDUISM

Strange that the two darkest spots on our civilization, should, in 1872 when Browning's *Fifine at the Fair* was published, have enriched the English language with two stinging words, the Nautch and Pariah. (I. S. R.)

## TAGORE ON ARYAN AND DRAVIDIAN*

Poet Rabindranath Tagore is quoted as follows: "The ancient Dravidians were not deficient in civilisation. Contact with them made Hindu civilisation varied in aspect and deeper in spirit. The Dravidian was no theologian, but an expert in imagination, music and construction. Wherever the opposite geniuses of the Aryan and the Dravidian have been harmonised, beauty has leaped into life; wherever such union has failed, the moral ugliness is repulsive."†

*Is Tagore thinking of the dancing girls connected with temples in Southern India.?* §

## OUR FALLEN SISTERS

BY M. K. GANDHI.

Of all the evils for which man has made himself responsible, none is so degrading, so shocking, or so brutal as his abuse of the better half of humanity; to me, the female sex, not the weaker sex. It is the nobler of the two, for it is even to-day the embodiment of sacrifice, silent suffering, humility, faith and knowledge. A woman's intuition has often proved truer than man's arrogant assumption of superior knowledge. There is

*See notes on "Tamil As Missing Link" in *The Sunday Times Supplement*, Madras, August 18, 1935.

† The quotation is obviously from my friend Mr. K. S. Ramaswami Sastri's book, *Rabindranath Tagore*, published by Messrs. Ganesh and Co., Madras, 1916. See the Preface by Mr. K. S. R. Sastri.

§The query is by Thotakaran in *The Social Reform Advocate*, Madras, 29th July 1916. This was ably edited by Mr. O. K. Chetty.

method in putting Sita before Rama and Radha before Krishna. Let us not delude ourselves into the belief, that this gambling in vice has a place in our evolution because it is rampant and in some cases even state-regulated in civilized Europe. Let us not also perpetuate the vice on the strength of Indian precedents. We should cease to grow the moment we cease to discriminate between virtue and vice, and slavishly copy the past which we do not fully know. We are proud heirs to all that was noblest and best in the by-gone age. We must not dishonour our heritage by multiplying past errors. In a self-respecting India, is not every woman's virtue as much every man's concern as his own sister's? Swaraj means ability to regard every inhabitant of India as our own brother or sister.¶

...If there are 350 unhappy sisters in a population of 20,000, there may be 52,50,000 in all India But I flatter myself with the belief that four-fifths of the population of India, which live in the villages and are purely agricultural, are not touched by the vice. The lowest figure for all India would therefore be 10,50,000 women living on the sale of their own honour. Before these unfortunate sisters could be weaned from their degradation, two conditions have to be fulfilled. We men must learn to control our passions, and these women should be found a calling that would enable them to earn an honourable living.*

¶ "Remember that a woman was your mother before a woman became your wife." Gandhiji, *Harijan*, p. 327. Nov. 21, 1936.

**Young India*, September 15, 1921.

## SOCIAL REFORM FROM WITHIN

BY M. K. GANDHI.

"Of all the addresses I received in the south the most touching was one on behalf of the Devadasis—a euphemism for prostitutes. It was prepared and brought by people who belong to the clan from which these unfortunate sisters are drawn. I understood from the deputation that brought the address that reform from within was going on, but that the rate of progress was still slow. The gentleman who led the deputation† told me that the public in general was apathetic to the reform". (Mr. C. F. Andrews: *Mahatma Gandhi's Ideas*, p. 325, George Allen & Unwin, 1929).

## DEVA-DASIS IN MYSORE

No. 1872-9—Muz. 422-08-6, dated Bangalore, 28th January, 1910.

The Government observe that whatever may be the euphemism by which the true nature of the ceremony is concealed, Gejje Puje has an intimate connection with dedication to the profession of a prostitute dancing girl. They are not prepared to allow the performance of such a ceremony in a Muzrai temple; and are satisfied from the depositions and the opinion of the Muzrai Agamik on record that no hardship will be caused by the prohibition of the

† At Pudupalayam and later on in Mayavaram, I led the deputation; and Gandhiji gave us valuable suggestions towards the solution of the Deva-Dasi problem which is confined to Peninsular India. *N. L.*

performance of such ceremonies in temples. They accordingly prohibit the performance of Gejje Puje or any similar ceremony within the precincts of any temple under the control of the Government in the Muzrai Department. This will, of course, not prevent women of this class from resorting to temples with offerings for the purposes of performing puja to the same extent as they have hitherto been by usage allowed.

Thus, finally in 1910, the Mysore Government prohibited the dedication of women in the temples. It is worthy of note that the Hindu community raised no protest against this reform. On the other hand, there is every reason to think that the public appreciate it and that they have not merely acquiesced in it, but have accepted it, heartily as a wholesome religious and social reform. This is a striking instance of what a wise national government can do. (I. S. R. 27. 8. 1927).

...The method adopted by the Mysore Government is the best way of dealing with the evil custom. The wages and perquisites enjoyed by the present devadasis should be left to them, but their services in the temples should no longer be requisitioned. When these die, no successors should be appointed to take their places. The endowments which provide for their allowances, should be utilised, with the sanction of the proper authorities, for helping primarily girls of these castes to be educated and settle down in life, and generally for advancing women's education and social reforms relating to women. A series of personal interviews with women of this class was published in the *Indian Social Reformer* at the time of the starting of the anti-nautch

movement in the early nineties,¶ and it was almost invariably the case that practising devadasis expressed a strong wish that their daughters should not follow their profession. They themselves acquiesced in it in a fatalistic vein, but they were anxious that their daughters should be spared their lot in life.

I.S.R. 5. 11. 1927.

## GAUTAMA BUDDHA

(SWAMI VIVEKANANDA)

**A friend asked:** Why, Swamiji, I did not know that you were a Buddhist; Vivekananda replied, his whole face aglow with the inspiration of that name: "I am the servant of the servants of Buddha. Who was there ever like Him-the Lord-who never performed one action for Himself? With a heart that embraced the whole world, so full of pity that He-Prince and monk-would give His life to save a little goat? So loving that He sacrificed himself to the hunger of a tigress? To the hospitality of a Courtesan...and blessed her? And He came into my room when I was a boy and I fell at His feet. For I knew it was the Lord Himself."—*The Brahma-vadin*, Madras, Vol. XI

¶ "A leading article in the *Indian Social Reformer* headed 'Is She Not A Woman and A Sister?' started what was then called the anti-nautch movement. Surprising as it seems at the present day, this movement excited bitter opposition." This movement was not directed against singing and dancing as such, but against the "gradation and degradation" of the caste system which enables a particular class of unmarried women to practise the two fine arts, as a mere cloak for vice. *N. L.*

# SPIRITUAL VALUES OF FAMILY LIFE

I.S.R. *November 12, 1927.*

The disintegrating forces at work undermining the influences of the family in America are a matter of grave concern to social workers. A recent number of the *Social Welfare* of Toronto contains some excellent addresses on this subject delivered at the conference of social workers held at Buffalo in October. In a remarkably thoughtful address on the 'Spiritual Values of Family Life,' the Rev. E. H. Toye has spoken of the family as the most important social and religious institution in the world. To us in India for whom the sanctity of the family and the dependence of the community on family life are fundamental, there is nothing new in this idea. While enumerating the spiritual values, Mr. Toye shrewdly remarks that no substitute has yet been found for the right kind of a home for the development of the moral virtues. The part played by the family in the formation of character is beautifully set out in the following words :—

We need constantly to remind ourselves that character never simply happens. It depends upon conditions, just as truly as does the harvest. You do not inherit it. You cannot buy it nor steal it. It does not come by some miracle of grace in the sense of some strange intervention of the Divine. Character is grown, it is builded, it is developed. The best soil that we have yet discovered for the growing of character is the right kind of a home. Here is a little group of old and

young, mature and immature, strong and weak, living together in mutual love. Every day affords opportunities for the exercise of patience, helpfulness, unselfishness, courtesy and sacrifice, all those moral qualities which form the basis of all growth in moral character. Not that we undertake to follow in any mechanical fashion a programme which has been devised, but spontaneously in the ordinary contacts and ordinary relations in a society in which love holds sway we learn those virtues which are the priceless treasures of life. Some one has said "character is not taught so much as it is caught." It is not regulated from without but it grows from within.

## INDIAN RENAISSANCE

The *Indian Daily Mail* writing on the renaissance of Indian art as illustrated by music, dancing and dramatic performances given in Bombay in which cultured and educated Indian women took part, makes the following suggestion:— "The new movement deserves encouragement and it also needs co-ordination. An Indian Renaissance Association with ample funds is needed for both purposes. Without such an organization, efforts are bound to be sporadic and to entail unjustifiable sacrifices on the part of those who, from wholly disinterested motives, are striving to revive and raise the standard of Indian art under modern conditions. The greatest credit is due in particular to the talented women who are taking a leading part in the new movement. They are rescuing the arts of music and dancing from the hands of professional nautch women

and restoring them to their ancient high status in Indian life. Princesses and ladies of noble families sang and danced before the shrines of ancient India, and considered it a religious duty.

They were the true devadasis, a name which has now come to be applied to a very different class of women. The time is not distant when these great arts will once more flourish as valued accomplishments of women of education and refinement in every home in the land". (I.S.R. 14. 4. 1928).

## DEVADASIS IN TRAVANCORE

The * Maharani Regent of Travancore has issued an order doing away with the practice of *Devadasis* being attached to temples in the State. These women, originally a sort of nuns, are now virtually dedicated courtesans. *The Guardian* observes that in Travancore all the temples are directly under the State and so it will be a comparatively easy matter to put a stop without delay to this connection of religion and immorality in that State. "We have no doubt" adds our contemporary, "that arrangements will be made to ensure that the Devadasis themselves will not be turned adrift but will be provided with some adequate means of livelihood. This is another indication of the trend of social reform

* "John Stuart Mill has said that his official experience in the India Office has shown him that in India, if a State was well-governed, it would generally be found that it was governed by a woman." —Sir Sankaran Nair's Speech, Belgaum, 27. 12. 1924.

all over the country, as well as of the value of the influence of womanhood in legislation. Men may tolerate many things of this nature but the coming of women into active political life has already resulted in many wider reacting reforms in regard to women's disabilities". (I.S.R. 30. 8. 1930).

## REVIVAL OF NAUTCH

†I.S.R. *February 9, 1935*

We published last week a letter from a veteran worker in the cause of social purity, Mr. N. Lakshmanan, expressing his apprehension that the discredited practice of the nautch may be revived under guise of reviving a national art. Some of the doctrines proclaimed in the name of Art are of a questionable character, but we do not think that the revival of the nautch is a probability. The position of women in India today, the recognition of their place in public life, their contributions to national causes, their enhanced sense of what is due to them, their vigilant regard protecting women from exploitation, economic and moral, the awakening among

†My own name comes in it, but I have felt that I must leave it intact. In presenting to me his book, *Our Trip to America*, Mr. K. Natarajan wrote with characteristic generosity: "To Mr. Lakshmana, from an old friend who admires his strenuous fight against an evil custom and congratulates him on his victory. K. N. October 27, 1935, Bandra." Please see the chapter on "What I owe to Tagore, Gandhi and Natarajan" in my forth-coming book, *Devadasi*

Deenabandhu C. F. Andrews has kindly suggested that I should publish the inner history of the Social Purity Movement in India, as no such book is available at present. *N.L.*

the devadasi class itself, thanks to the unwearying efforts of men like Mr. Lakshmanan, and the attractions of the §cinema so much more lurid than that of the most daring nautches, are all conditions which tell against the revival feared by him. Indian dance is now being studied and fostered from a purely cultural point of view and it is not unlikely that young women of the class which used to breed nautch girls may become the best exponents of Indian dance. We are sure that Mr. Lakshmanan will be the last to object to such a development.*

## ABOLITION OF DEVADASI SYSTEM

NEW REGULATION IN COCHIN, JUNE 23, 1936.

In the course of a private letter, Sir R. K. Shanmukham Chetty, Dewan of Cochin, wrote to me to say: "We were able to put on the Statute Book here a measure abolishing the Devadasi system." A summary of the Regulation is reproduced below from *The Hindu*.

An important measure of social legislation, namely, the Prevention of Dedication Regulation has been placed on the statute book, the measure having just received the assent of His Highness the Maharaja of Cochin.

§ *Will the Screen Wreck Womanhood?* in "Dharma Rajya," Delhi, 10. 12. 1936.

*Never by avoiding or discarding normal married life. As Mr. K. Natarajan is a life-long believer in monogamy, he will be the first to encourage the growth of marriage among the daughters of Devadasis. *This* is the need of the hour. Beware of Don Juans.—*N.L.*

The Regulation prevents the dedication of women to Hindu temples, and extends to the whole of the State. The performance of "sanctioning Chela" or "wedding to dagger" or any other similar ceremony, in the precincts of Hindu temples or other places of worship or elsewhere, with a view to dedicating a Hindu woman is declared illegal by the Regulation.

The measure encourages valid marriages in the case of Devadasis as it lays down that a Hindu woman, who has been dedicated, may enter into a legal marriage and such marriages shall be recognised as valid, notwithstanding any law, custom, or usage to the contrary.

Under the law, any one who permits, performs or takes part in the performance or abets the performance of the ceremony of "sanctioning Chela" or "wedding to dagger" or any other similar ceremony within the precincts of a Hindu temple or any other place of worship or elsewhere, with a view to dedicating any Hindu woman shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to one year and shall also be liable to a fine not exceeding rupees one thousand.

Nothing in the Regulation shall be construed to prevent any person from being liable under Sections 352 and 353 of the Cochin Penal Code, or under any other law for the time being in force, or to any other or higher punishment than is provided in the Regulation; provided that no person shall be prosecuted under the Regulation, if he was convicted under any of the provisions of the law mentioned above.

## TEMPLE DANCING IN JAPAN

For a graphic description of Japanese Temple Dancing in its pristine purity, see the late lamented Sir Lalubhai Samaldas Mehta's book, *Impressions of Japan*, published by Messrs Taraporevala Sons & Co., Bombay, 1933.

## AN INDELIBLE BLOT ON HINDUISM

I.S.R. *Feb. 20, 1916.*

Mr. Gandhi, who has been spending a few days in Madras, delivered an address to the students of Madras on Tuesday. In the course of his observations he referred to the existence of a class of "untouchables" in India as an indelible blot on Hinduism. "I have declined to believe," he continued, "that it has been handed to us from immemorial times. I think that these miserable, wretched, enslaving spirits of untouchables must have come to us when we were in a cycle of our lives at our lowest ebb, and that evil has stuck to us, and it remains with us. It is to my mind a curse that has come to us, and so long as it remains with us, we are bound to consider that every affliction that we labour under in this sacred land is a fit and proper punishment for the great crime that we are committing. That any person should be considered untouchable because of his §calling passes one's comprehension, and you, the student world, who receive all this modern education, if you become a party to this crime, it were better that you receive no education whatsoever."

§Gandhiji on the Ideal Bhangi, *Harijan*, 28. 11. 1936.

Bhangi means sweeper. Harijan is the name given by Gandhiji to the so-called untouchable or Antyaja. What was indelible has become "delible" within two decades, 1916–1936. *N.L.*

## GREATER INDIA

I.S.R., *September 14, 1929.*

We refer in another note to the lectures on Greater India which Dr. Kalidas Nag of the Greater India Society delivered this week at the Bombay University. Dr. Nag's lectures especially towards the end, when the public came to know of them, were followed with breathless interest by crowded audiences of intelligent and educated men and women. They were illustrated by striking magic lantern pictures which brought Dr. Nag's descriptions vividly home to his hearers. The lectures dealt with ancient Hindu colonisation in Indo-China, and the islands of the Indian archipelago right up to Java. Dr. Nag has visited many of these places and studied the monuments on the spot, and he speaks, therefore, of them with an enthusiasm which is infectious. Many of his audience, learnt for the first time that Indian history does not begin and end with India. India's relations with Persia, Greece and Rome have been fairly well-known. Less known are the more recent discoveries of her influence in Asia Minor and Central Asia. Even less known, are her profoundly fruitful contacts with Eastern Asia which Bengali scholars like Benoy Kumar Sarcar and Dr. Kalidas Nag have done much to elucidate. The Poet, Tagore has been a great inspiring force in this fascinating field of study. In an interview with a representative of the *Rand Daily Mail*, Geheimrat Professor, Dr. Leo Frobenius, leader of the German Africa Expedition hinted at the existence of Indian influences in the ancient culture of South Africa. Traces of it have been suggested in South America. Professor Leo Frobenius thought that there was at a certain period a

civilisation which reigned on the borders of the Indian Ocean. The centre of irradiation of this civilisation would seem to have been India, as Italy later was that of the Mediterranean civilisation. The Greater India Society, of which Dr. Tagore is the President, has been founded to make a systematic study of ancient Indian cultural expansion.

## UNTOUCHABLES AND TEMPLE ENTRY

I. S. R., *September 14, 1929.*

The right to use the public roads, to send children to public schools, to take water from the public sources of supply, are inherent in the idea of society and belongs to every member of it, rich or poor, high-born or low-born. To deny it to any individual or class is to court social revolution. We are glad to think that this is coming to be realised by the privileged class even in those parts of the country where the prejudice against the untouchables has been most rampant. Mr. Jamnalal Bajaj specially pleads for the free admission of these classes to all Hindu temples. We have ourselves relinquished temple worship for many years past, finding no temple so inspiring as the open sky and the daily miracle of the rising sun. But as Mr. Bajaj says, the temple in India and, as Professor Kalidas Nag's lectures at the Bombay University this week show, wherever Hindu cultural influence spread, whether in distant Java or Cambodia, has been the centre not only of religious, but also of social, educational and aesthetic life. Many of our temples nowadays hardly maintain this great tradition. It may be, because they have become exclusive. There is no doubt that the depressed classes are a vast reservoir of spiritual and

social energy whose liberation will provide the dynamic for want of which national progress is marking time. We earnestly support Mr. Bajaj's appeal, and we would add that in breaking down the barriers which are driving the depressed classes to the verge of revolt, Mr. Jamnalal Bajaj is rendering the highest service to the Hindu community and to the Indian nation at large. Because, after all, the Hindu community is the basic stratum of the nation whose characteristics, good or bad, affect the whole population.

## THE ANTYAJAS AND TEMPLE ENTRY

I.S.R. *March 15, 1930.*

We are sorry that some remarks in our leading article last week conveyed the impression that the movement for securing admission to the antyajas in Hindu temples, had a political motive behind it. We have had a vivid account of the proceedings in Nasik from a friend who witnessed them, and we are convinced that any such impression will be a great injustice to its promoters. The devotion and earnestness of the women in particular is most touching, as described to us, and even orthodox people, whose minds are not hardened to considerations of humanity, have been moved by it. This movement should be viewed really as an integral part of the great movement which is going on before our eyes and which is transforming Hinduism from a passive system of social regulations into an active influence penetrating every fibre of the national life. Such movements have occurred from time to time in the history of Hinduism, once when Vedic religion developed into the Vedanta and the other

schools were merged in the great synthesis of the *Bhagavad Gita*. When orthodox Hindus come to understand and live up to the central creed of the *Sanatana Dharma*, the very meaning of which they have misunderstood, they will realise that much of what they hug to their bosoms as Hindu religion is totally and completely repugnant to it. Mahatma Gandhi's campaign is a visible illustration of the *Sanatana Dharma* in action. ...His action is an expression of a great spiritual crisis in the life of the Indian and most particularly of the Hindu people who constitute the overwhelming majority of the population. The profound underlying principles of Hinduism are being visibly enacted so that

> He may read that binds the sheaf
> Or builds the house or digs the grave
> And those wild eyes which watch the wave
> In roarings round the coral reef.

## RANADE ON SELF-RESPECT

"Great and wise men in the past or in the present, have a claim on our regards. But they must not come between us and our God—the Divine principle seated within every one of us, high or low. It is this sense of self-respect, or rather of respect to the God in us, which has to be cultivated, and it is a tender plant which takes years and years to cultivate. But we have the capacity, and we owe it as a duty to ourselves to undertake the task. Reverence all human authority, pay your respect to all prophets and revelations, but subordinate that reverence to the Divine command in us."
—Ranade's Address at Amraoti, 1897, *Essays*, p.175.

# THE INTERNAL STRUGGLE IN HINDU SOCIETY

I.S.R. *May 24, 1930.*

We have before us two addresses, delivered at the second Self-Respect Conference held at Erode in Southern India by Mr. Shanmukham Chetty; and the other, delivered at the seventh All-India Depressed Classes Conference held at Amraoti in the Central Provinces, by Mr. R. S. Nekaljay. The Self-Respect Conference, broadly speaking, is a movement of non-Brahmin Caste Hindus against the social and religious superiority of Brahmins; while the Depressed Classes Conference voices the revolt of these classes, to Brahmins as well as non-Brahmin Caste Hindus. Mr. R. K. Shanmukham in his address wisely kept in the background the sectional origin of the Self-Respect Conference and represented it as identical with the social reform movement with the difference that while the latter originated with the higher strata of Society, the Self-Respect movement is an off shoot of the Non-Brahmin movement, is, as the *Guardian* of Calcutta says, the spear head of that movement. There is another difference which may be noted here. The social reform movement from its origin has concentrated largely on questions affecting women, while the Self-Respect movement is especially concerned with the caste system. Social Reformers did not altogether ignore caste, but they seldom went much beyond advocating the fusion of sub-castes. The Self-Respect Conference, on the other hand, stands for the abolition of caste. In fact, according to Mr. R. K. Shanmukham, the Self-Respect Conference makes the giving up of Caste the test of a true Nationalist. The selection of Mr. M. R. Jayakar to preside over the Erode

Conference, as well as Mr. Shanmukham's address, are signs of the gratifying change which is coming over the non-Brahmin movement.$ Mr. M. R. Jayakar is a Sanskrit classical and Vedantic scholar and an influential leader of the Hindu renaissance movement. His address which we publish to-day* is a characteristically thoughtful attempt to bring the Self-Respect Conference in line with the larger Hinduism of the present day. While approving the designation of the Conference, Mr. Jayakar stressed throughout his address the importance of cultivating respect for the higher rather than for the lower Self in the spirit of the Bhagavad Gita. "Let a man uplift himself by the Self. Let him not drag himself down. For the Self alone is the friend of the self. And the self alone is the enemy of the Self."

Mr. Nekaljay's indictment is against caste Hindus—Brahmins and non-Brahmins alike, and also Mahomedans who are recognised as political allies by the non-Brahmin movement. In fact, it is the chief count in his indictment that caste Hindus have bartered the just claims of the depressed classes in order to make friends with Mussalmans. Mr. Nekaljay warns the depressed classes against conversion to Islam, but he suggests that the Catholic monastic orders should be introduced into India to establish agricultural communities of the depressed classes. This is not far from favouring the conversion to Roman

$Mr. K. Natarajan has said, again and again, that the Depressed Classes will remain as such, as long as the caste system remains in India. For a full discussion of the subject, I am devoting a volume, *Castes and Outcastes*.—*N.L.*

*Omitted here, but included in a subsequent volume.—*N.L.*

Catholicism of these classes.† The example of France which Mr. Nekaljay cites in support of his proposal, is altogether misleading, as it was the French Revolution and not Catholic monasticism which established the system of peasant proprietors in that country. The conversion of the depressed classes to Christianity will not solve their problem any more than their conversion to Islam. There are depressed classes in both religions, while merely as regards racial equality, Islam, by general admission, is far ahead of Christianity. The contrast is most glaring in Africa where the Negro Christian is not allowed to worship in the same church as the White Christian. Mr. Nekaljay's indictment of caste Hindus is unanswerable—though he does less than justice to Mahatma Gandhi and the Hindu Maha Sabha for their efforts to create public opinion against untouchability—and we cordially support the education and franchise proposals which he puts forward for securing for these classes of our people equal opportunities and rights with the rest. Our faith in the franchise is somewhat less than that of Mr. Nekaljay. We do not believe in the magical powers of the ballot box. Still, however, adequate representation in the Legislature will certainly place them in a position of influence with the other members, and we would strongly recommend that the claims put forward by men like Dr. Ambedkar and Mr. Nekaljay should receive the most sympathetic consideration and support of all other representatives at the Round Table Conference as well as of Government.

As for social and religious disabilities we can assure Mr. Nekaljay that there is already a radical change in

† "Religious apostacy as a means of economic uplift is a snare and a delusion." I.S R. 18. 10. 1930.

caste Hindu opinion as the result mainly of Mahatma Gandhi's precepts and practice, and *we are sure that in ten years' time at the most, these disabilities will be things of the past.*$ There are pessimists in and outside Hindu society who regard these movements as portending disintegration. We believe, on the contrary, that they are proof that the Hindu social organism is becoming imbued with a political principle which has so long been absent from it. Hindu society has adapted itself from time to time to new ideas, and this is exactly what it is doing now. The most hopeful sign of the times is that Hindu women who were opposed to social reforms, are now coming forward to accelerate them. The part played by them in throwing open the Dacca temple (in East Bengal) shows that they are keen on carrying out this reform also.

$ Italics mine. This is a typical instance of Mr. K. Natarajan's optimism and his capacity for forecasting events. He also anticipated the birth of the Non-Brahmin movement more than a generation ago; but his warning went unheeded in Madras, nearly half a century ago. He is indeed a living barometer of trends of thought in India and abroad.-*N.L.*

## PANDIT JAWAHARLAL IN SOUTH INDIA

I. S. R. *October 24, 1936.*

In the *Reformer* of September 26th we referred to the recent visit of His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore to Europe as putting the coping stone on the reform relating to the ban on sea voyages by Hindus. An even more striking proof of the fact was afforded during the visit of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, President of the Indian National Congress, to Madura. We quote from the admirable reports of his tour in Southern India in the *Hindu.*

On arrival from Aruppukottai, he (the Pandit) went to the Sri Minakshi temple for worship, and though his visit was kept a secret, huge crowds of people thronged the temple precincts in order to see him. Mr. Nehru was accorded temple honours by the authorities of the temple. He was much impressed with the beautiful architecture and sculpture in the temple.

Not many years ago the great temples of Southern India denied admission to Hindus who had been on sea voyages. Gandhiji was, on this account, refused admission to the Kanya Kumari temple, Cape Comorin.* Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has not only made several sea voyages. He resided in England for many years. The Pandit's speeches in the South breathed a spirit not hitherto so clearly discernible in his utterances elsewhere. He has realised the importance of linking up the

* Compare foot-note on p. 102.

national movement with India's genius as disclosed by her ancient achievements which hitherto he was rather inclined to minimise, if not to depreciate, as irrelevant to presentday problems.* There is a new note of reverence in his Southern utterances which is likely greatly to enhance his influence as a national leader. With reference to the Pandit's observation that the economic aspect of life was neglected in the pursuit of religion, the following passage from Sir Thomas Munro's evidence before a Parliamentary Committee in 1812, shows that the Hindu system fully recognised and provided for the economic interests of the community.

The people of India, said Sir T. Munro, are as much shopkeepers as we are ourselves. They never lose sight of the shop: they carry it into all their concerns, religious and civil. All their holy places and resorts for pilgrims are so many fairs for the sale of goods of all kinds. Religion and trade are in India sister arts: the one is seldom found in any large assembly without the society of the other.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru referred to the establishment of pilgrim centres in all parts of the country as having promoted the unity of India's culture. Along the routes to these centres trade also established itself. The lack of economic interest at the present time, is not due to religion.

*In the concluding portion of his Autobiography, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru referred (in April 1936) to his "spiritual loneliness." In a Memo dated 23—11—1936, the Director of Public Instruction, Madras, wrote that the book is an interesting piece of literature and has been supplied to libraries under Government control.—N.L.

## TEMPLE-ENTRY IN TRAVANCORE

I.S.R. *November 21, 1936.*

On the 12th of November, his twenty-fifth birthday, His Highness the Maharaja of Travancore issued the following proclamation:—

Profoundly convinced of the truth and validity of our religion, believing that it is based on Divine guidance and on an all-comprehending toleration, knowing that in its practice, it has throughout the centuries adapted itself to the needs of changing times, and being solicitous that none of my Hindu subjects should by reason of birth or caste or community, be denied the consolations and solace of the Hindu faith, I have decided and hereby declare, ordain and command that, subject to such rules and conditions as may be laid down and imposed for preserving their proper atmosphere and maintaining their rituals and observances, there should henceforth be no restriction placed on any Hindu by birth or religion on entering or worshipping at the temples controlled by Government.

In nobility of sentiment and of language this proclamation takes rank with the great State papers of history. The breadth and universality of Hinduism have seldom been emphasised in happier phrases. The young Maharaja has made for himself by this act a position second to none in the long and lustrous roll of Indian princes who, at times of crisis, have stemmed the tide of reaction which threatened to submerge the ancient Indian traditions of religious toleration and honourable asylum for persecuted peoples. A large

measure of credit for this splendid act of emancipation, should be accorded to Her Highness the Maharani, mother of the Maharaja, whose enlightened leadership is among the most promising features of the Indian women's movement. Tribute is also due to the Dewàn, Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer who, within a month of his assuming office, has given signal proof of his courage as a statesman by taking on himself the responsibility of advising His Highness the Maharaja to give concrete expression to his earnest wishes to remove the disabilities of a large and loyal class of his devoted subjects, disabilities which had not only no basis in, but were totally contrary to, the fundamental principle of Hinduism. The action of His Highness does not come as a bolt from the blue. It has behind it the precept and example of the greatest spirits of our time. The Maharaja Gaekwar of Baroda, a pioneer in social reform among Indian rulers, anticipated it some three or four years ago by throwing open the Hindu temples under State management to all classes of Hindus, including the antyajas. Of not less importance to the movement for the removal of untouchability, is the admission, hitherto denied, by order of His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore, of antyaja citizens to the important semi-religious State function of Durbar during Dusserah week. Both these Princes had prepared the ground for the attainment by antyajas of equal status with other Hindus by well-thought-out schemes, that have operated for many years for the education and upbringing of their children under the auspices of their respective States,

In British India, the condition of antyajas had attracted the attention of the leaders of the National Social Conference. Sir Narayan Chandavarkar with Mr. V. R. Shinde founded the Depressed Classes Mission in the early years of this century. The importance of its work may be gauged from the fact that several leading antyaja workers were trained in the institutions conducted by the Mission. Gokhale† kept aloof from the social reform movement with which he was in sympathy; but he made an exception in the case of the removal of untouchability which he warmly espoused. So did B. G. Tilak,§ the champion of orthodox Hinduism among Indian political leaders. The tremendous impetus given to this reform by the devoted labours of Gandhiji to redeem Hindu society from this great blot upon it, has been, of course, a determining factor in bringing about the revolutionary change which has come over opinion even among orthodox Hindus. The action of the Maharaja of Travancore comes, therefore, as the culmination of a movement of Hindu thought inspired by the finest minds of India for over half a century. It is nonetheless notable for this fact which, on the contrary, invests it with the inevitability of historical evolution.

†Gokhale introduced Mr. Vittal Ramji Shinde, to a Madras audience, as the life and soul of the Depressed Classes Mission in Western India. I heard the great statesman's speech in the national week of December 1908. My impressions of Mr. V. R. Shinde and his pioneer service appear in my forth-coming book, *Village Guidance in the New Era.—N.L.*

§ This was in 1918 when H. H. The Maharaja Gaekwar of Baroda delivered the memorable Presidential Address in Bombay.—*N.L.*

# A SPUR TO FURTHER PURIFICATION

(BY M. K. GANDHI)

If the Travancore proclamation of the religious freedom of Harijans is a matter for great rejoicing, it is also an event calling us to greater humiliation, greater effort and greater purification. It is not the end of untouchability. It is certainly, as C. Rajagopalachari says, 'an indication of the potentiality that exists in us, if only we seek His aid'. It inspires us with hope and faith in our mission. But on no account will it warrant relaxation of effort and vigilance over ourselves. If the proclamation is a result of prayer and purification, if the mute prayer of the selfless workers of Travancore aided by kindred spirits all over India, rather than the advertised meetings and their resolutions, inspired H. H. the Maharajah and his advisers to issue the proclamation ( it does not matter whether consciously or unconsciously to them), it follows that greater selflessness and devotion of workers must do the rest.

Let us realize the contents of the rest. We do not yet know how the orthodoxy of Travancore and the Harijans will react to the proclamation. If it is not followed up by suitable response on the part of the public, it can easily become a dead letter. The mere opening of temples will mean nothing, if it does not lead to their purification and that of the priesthood.†

† Since writing this, Gandhiji has toured in the Travancore State and has worshipped in all the important temples, along with the Harijans. He is thoroughly satisfied with the response of the local people.—N.L.

The opening of temples in Travancore must lead to their opening in the sister State of Cochin and must also lead to the opening of the sister temple of Guruvayyur. These are of a piece, guided by the same tradition and ceremonial. Then come the great temples of Tamil, Telugu and Canarese India. Kashi-Vishwanath, Dwaraka and Puri temples in the North, West and East still remain closed to the Harijans. Of the big black patches of India, Travancore, though a big patch in itself, considered relatively was a small speck. It has, by the grace of God showing itself through the proclamation of H. H. the Maharajah, become suddenly a bright spot radiating its light throughout India. Will the radiation prove strong enough to affect the big patches I have mentioned?

And the religious freedom, if it is real in the sense that it comes from the heart of orthodoxy, must be followed by the economic and social betterment of the Harijans all over India.

A mere mention of these most important things should be sufficient to chasten us. But it cannot frighten us if we have a living faith in God and our cause

For this great and glorious task we want more workers — men and women, boys and girls. We want more money, paper, gold, silver, copper, even handfuls of grain, but these too will surely, as also only, come if the workers whom we already have, are, like Caesar's wife, above suspicion. Are we all pure in heart? Are we faithful to our trust? Have we faith in the purely

spiritual nature of our mission? If the answers can be in the affirmative, all is well. But the cases I have somewhat discussed in these columns and which I am still following up, make me cautious. How will it fare if we have other black sheep among us? We are none without sin. But if we are not men enough publicly and without any attempt to underestimate it, to own up to our guilt, again I ask, how will it fare with us and the cause we have dared to represent? My rejoicing over the proclamation is thus tempered by the necessary sadness induced by a vivid knowledge of what is happening in our midst. No cause for gloom, equally no warrant for over-exultation, but the greatest cause for vigilant introspection and a vivid sense of our responsibility rendered greater by the proclamation.

*Harijan*, November *28, 1936.*

## TEMPLE ENTRY IN TRAVANCORE

I. S. R. *November 28, 1936.*

The proclamation of the Maharaja opening the Hindu temples under the management of the State to antyajas who have hitherto been prohibited entrance, has taken effect with an absence of untoward incidents which must surprise those who have not followed the movement of social thought in the country for nearly a century. Without previous preparation of the ground such as was indicated in our leading article last week, the admission of antyajas to temples in Travancore would have been an innovation which would require to be enforced by all the resources of Government. This, practically, means that it

could not have been enforced. Besides the great change which has come over Hindu opinion, the large proportion of well-educated people among caste Hindus and the striking advance in social and economic conditions that has been made by the antyajas in Travancore, have been special factors that have contributed to the smooth working of the reform. The Hindu community has always shown itself ready to accept reforms which have been shown to be beneficial by the example of men of light and leading. Like all ancient communities, it starts with a distrust of every proposal which involves a change in the existing order. But when it is convinced that the change is necessary and that its adoption is calculated to strengthen and not to undermine the foundations of social life, it unhesitatingly accepts the change which, indeed, thenceforward, becomes an integral part of its conservatism. In this respect, Hindu mentality has affinities with British mentality. This has been the case in regard to other prohibitions, such as those on sea voyage, remarriage of Hindu widows, and keeping girls unmarried past the age of puberty. One point, however, must be borne in mind. In the case of removal of old bans, the test of acceptance by the community of a reform, is not the number of people who avail themselves of the change, but the withdrawal of opposition to any one availing himself or herself of it. The number of Hindu widows who remarry is still not considerable. There are other reasons, sentimental and practical and even legal, which lead many of them to remain single. Emigration laws and economic necessity restrict the number of persons who travel overseas. The want of a sufficient number of girls' schools and sufficient accommodation for girls in boys' schools, is the principal reason why a large number of

parents, who are convinced of its beneficial character, are obliged to act in violation of the Sarda Act.* But in each case, the hardships to which reformers in the past were subjected for infringing caste rules, no longer exist. There is no opposition on the part of the community if the individual decides to adopt the way of reform.

## JAPAN AND TRAVANCORE

Replying at Kumaranallur (a citadel of Hindu orthodoxy) to the address of welcome read by Mr. K. N. Kesavan Nambudiripad on behalf of the Nambudiri Jenmies of Travancore, Dewan Sachivothama Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer said:—

The address had rightly paid a tribute to Maharani Sethu Parvathi Bai for having brought up the Maharaja in such an atmosphere that he was able to hear the voice from above. Having heard that voice he had the courage and the determination to translate into action his understanding of that voice. Happy were they who heard those voices and guided their conduct in unison with the dictates of those voices.

It would be his privilege and his duty to convey to the Maharaja the fervent sentiments of loyalty and devotion to the Maharaja and his family expressed by the Nambudiri community in their address. The act of having thrown open their important shrines to all Hindus afforded a striking example of their loyalty to His Highness. It showed that Nambudiris were a progressive people; they were prepared to jettison wrong ideas, preserve what was more important and throw away what

*Child Marriage Restraint Act.

was less important. It was in that spirit that the Nambudiris had followed the example of the Maharaja.

He cited the instance of Japan and how her nobility gave up their privileges just to unite that country. They awoke to the need for casting off the yoke of serfdom when the American guns thundered across the ocean. Members of the nobility one by one went up to the Emperor of Japan and plunged daggers into their bosoms saying : "With me dies the curse of Japanese nobility." That was the sacrifice they made to unify Japan. It was that spirit of patriotism, of self-abnegation, and of self-sacrifice that was needed in this country. It was in that spirit that the Nambudiris threw open their temples to all Hindus following the royal proclamation.

### NAMBUDIRI WOMEN

There was one wonderful note in the address which appealed to him most, namely, that the Nambudiri women had taken their rightful place in society and that they held progressive views on those matters of the moment. With such womenfolk, the Nambudiris had no reason to despair about their future. *(The Madras Mail, 17.12.1936).*

## CONVERSION AND UNTOUCHABILITY

Conversion to other religions as a means of getting rid of the stigma of untouchability, is not recognised *in Travancore.* A recent Government resolution confirms the order of the District Magistrate of Padmanabhapuram prohibiting "the Pardvas professing the Roman Catholic religion and the other non-Hindu and non-caste Hindu residents of the village of Cape Comorin from using for any purpose whatsoever the Kanyakumari Teppakulam or tank." I.S.R. 24.5.1930.

## MEDIAEVAL MYSTICS

BY RABINDRANATH TAGORE.

Some of our modern vernaculars developed permanent forms and produced a very rich harvest of literature. Our friend here, §Professor Kshitimohan Sen, who has studied the poetry of mediaeval India, can tell you of the great mystic poets who flourished in India from the 13th to the 16th and the 17th centuries. I became acquainted with their writings through him, and I was amazed to discover how modern they were, how full of genuine and earnest feeling of life and of beauty. All true things are ever modern and can never become obsolete.

We find in India that a deep mystic and religious sentiment has kept the mind of the people alive. In fact, it has always been the mission of our sages to give consolation to those living outside the pale of respectability and belonging to the castes which are looked down upon. They were inspired with something that was divine in their own being, which made the heart of the people vocal. The poems that have come out of such contact have marvellous depth of wisdom and beauty of form. We have in Bengal a wealth of such old lyrics inspired by the Vaishnava movement.¶

§ Professor Sen of Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan, writes to me to say that Tagore has gladly consented to my using some paras from *Talks in China* and that Gurudev wishes me all success.-N.L.

¶ This wealth of old lyrics is found almost all over India.-N.L.

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Contains vivid description of the Home of the Maharaja of Travancore, pages 29-70. Similar description of the Cochin State, pp. 71-85. (Nautch) The Dance of the Bayadere at Madura, pp. 115—118; at Pondicherry, 135—140.

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Mr. Late Nagamaya's *Manual of the Travancore State* is the best of its kind. The Cochin State spends one-fifth of its revenue on schools and colleges for both the sexes.

*Gandhiji in Indian Villages* by Mahadev Desai. Published by S. Ganesan, Triplicane, Madras, 1927.

The concluding chapter on Travancore is of current interest.

*My Soul's Agony* containing Gandhiji's statements on untouchability and important interviews on the subject.

This and "The Epic Fast" are available at Navajivan Karyalaya, Princess Street, Bombay.

*The Epic Fast* is an account by Pyarelal of Gandhiji's fast in September 1932 and the events leading up to the Yeravda Pact, with all relevent documents. See pages 282—284 for the list of temples, all over India, thrown open, by pious individuals, to the 'untouchables'.

From boyhood, Gandhiji began to regard untouchability as a sin. pp. 287—290.

Poet Tagore's speeches are of immense value to the student of contemporary life and thought. pp. 92 and 243.

The current numbers of *Harijan* are published under the auspices of The Harijan Sevak Sangh (Servants of the Untouchables Society). *Harijan* is a non-political English weekly journal whose editorials are from the pen of Gandhiji. It may be subscribed for by writing to the Manager, *Harijan*, The Aryabhushan Press, Bhamburda Peth, Poona City. Harijans are the "children of God". Annual Subscription of *Harijan* (Inland) Rs. 4 (Foreign) Rs. 5—8.

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Nitobe admires the deeds of the Samurai. Bushido means "Way of the Warrior." Hara-Kiri is a form of suicide formerly practised in Japan by members of the privileged class.

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# “THE WORLD’S UNBORN SOUL”

# SIGNS And PORTENTS

"The great question of our time is not communism or individualism; not Europe or America; not the East versus the West; it is whether man can bear to live without God."

Dr. Will Durant: *The Meaning of Life.*

## MODERN RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS IN INDIA.

I. S. R. *June 14, 1915.*

We have before us a volume dealing with modern religious movements in India, by Mr. J. N. Farquhar whose *Crown of Hinduism* is a landmark in the history of Christianity in relation to Hindu religious thought. In his new book, the author passes in review almost all movements in India, which have a religious side to them, connected with the Hindu, Mahomedan and Zoroastrian religions. We do not know why he has not included such movements in relation to Christianity. Though Protestant Christianity is still somewhat of an exotic in India, the Roman Catholic and Syrian Churches are represented by communities of some antiquity. Within the last century, which is the limit Mr. Farquhar has prescribed for himself, there have been a few movements worthy of notice especially in the Syrian Christian community. An altogether indigenous movement is the Yuyomayam sect of which an account is given in the Travancore Census Report. This sect is interesting as being about the sole instance of an endeavour to clothe Christianity in an Indian garb—the hereditary priest, the regulations as to food, the absence of public worship, and the Brahmanical *asirvadam*, being its principal features. Mr. Farquhar's accounts of the several movements, we need hardly say, are inspired by a strong desire to be fair and just and accurate. He begins with a historical outline of the period covered by

the various movements with which he deals, that is, the last one hundred and thirteen years. The policy of Government in relation to education, and social and religious questions generally, was not definitely formulated till about the middle of the last century, and that policy has had an important influence on the movements with which the book is concerned. Mr. Farquhar classifies these movements under five heads, namely, those favouring vigorous reform, those which represent a partial reaction from these towards the old faiths, those which are revival movements, those which are a combination of religion and nationalism, and those which are concerned with social reform and social service. There may be differences of opinion as to the appropriateness of including a particular movement in a particular group but, on the whole, it must be recognised that Mr. Farquhar has assigned movements to their proper groups with a fair measure of success. The Brahmo Samaj and the Prarthana Samaj are included in the first group of movements favouring serious reform; while the Arya Samaj, which is a reaction towards Vedic infallibility, goes in the second group.

While all fair-minded people will admit that the example and, in some cases, the fear of Christian Missions, have been greatly instrumental in stimulating social work in India, we think that few will acquiesce in Mr. Farquhar's view of the religious reform movements.

The old religions, he writes, are the soil from which the modern movements spring; while it will be found that the seed has, in the main, been sown by Missions.

What special doctrine or dogma have the principal religious movements borrowed from Christianity? All of them definitely reject the special dogma of that religion, namely, that Jesus Christ is the one and only incarnation of God. The existence of one God, is a doctrine familiar to India for many centuries. The sentiment against idolatry is more closely associated with Islam than with Christianity; it cannot, in any case, be regarded as a distinctive feature of Christianity. Disbelief in *Karma* is by no means a uniform feature of modern religious reform movements in India. Apart from the social service aspect of some of these movements, it is difficult to say that Christian influence is unmistakably evident in their religious contents. Christian missionaries have greatly stimulated Indian religious reform by challenge and criticism, sometimes, as Mr. Farquhar will readily admit, indiscriminate and unjust. The fact that Christian missions have been concentrating to an increasing extent on social work, and turning away from the inculcation of the dogmas of their faith, is itself due to an instinctive recognition on their part of the fact that the glory of Christianity is its spirit of social service, and not its profundity of speculation as to the nature of God, the soul of man, and the establishment of intercommunion between the two. To the Indian mind, it is the latter that is the subject matter of genuine religion, while feeding the hungry and clothing the naked are merely means of disciplining the soul into a spiritual mood. It will be very difficult to persuade the Hindu that philanthropic

work is an adequate substitute for religious contemplation.

There is another factor which must be taken into account in estimating the influence of Christianity as a religion, as distinguished from the example of Christian missionaries as social workers. During the larger part of the last century, it was possible to persuade Indians that their social and national depression was the outcome of their religious deficiencies. But what with the increasing knowledge among Indians of the grave social and economic inequalities in the Christian communities of Europe, and what with the evident powerlessness of Christianity to cope with the spirit of caste among its Indian missionaries and converts, the Indian is no longer able to take the claims made on behalf of Christianity entirely at their face value. And though we believe with Mr. C. F. Andrews that the present War (1914-1918) will hasten the advent of a purer Christianity, it is not wise to overlook the fact that the occurrence of the war is not of itself a testimony to the power of the Christian religion. The future of Christianity depends on the measure of success with which it can establish itself independently of the social and political paraphernalia which are generally, though wrongly, regarded as constituting civilization.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy is the father of modern India. He established the Brahmo Samaj or the Theistic Church at Calcutta on August 20, 1828.—*N.L.*

## CONTINUITY OF INDIAN THEISM

We are glad that Mr. Dwarkanath Govind Vaidya has availed himself of the occasion of the Diamond Jubilee to publish a history of the Prarthana Samaj with biographical sketches of its founders and leaders. The work is in Marathi. Mr. Vaidya has a pleasing and direct style which holds the interest of the reader. The omission to which we had referred in noticing the memorial volume edited by Mr. Chitnis, is supplied in Mr. Vaidya's biography of Ranade. The following quotation from one of Ranade's speeches is given in the original English. Speaking of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ranade said: "With the Raja, the Brahma Samaj faith was not a New Dispensation, a new declaration of God's purposes. He aspired only to establish harmony between men's accepted faith and their practical observances by a strict monolatrous worship of the One Supreme Soul, a worship of the heart and not of the hands, a sacrifice of self and not the possessions of the self. *There was nothing Christian in its conception, origin or method.*" On another occasion, Ranade maintained the Brahma Samaj "can claim a long ancestry, as old as any of the sects prevailing in the country. The Brahma movement was not first brought into existence in 1828; we are representatives of an old race." This insistence on the unbroken continuity of Indian Theism and the repudiation of any foreign influence in it, mark the essential distinction between the Brahmo Samaj of Bengal and the Bombay Prarthana Samaj. Mr. Vaidya's book is a valuable contribution to the literature of modern religious movements in this country. The book is published at the Prarthana Samaj, Girgaum, Bombay.

—I.S.R. 16. 4. 1927.

# A CHAPTER OF AUTOBIOGRAPHY

(By RABINDRANATH TAGORE).

I was born in 1861: that is not an important date of history, but it belongs to a great period of our history in Bengal. You do not know perhaps that we have our places of pilgrimage in those spots where the rivers meet in confluence, the rivers which to us are the symbols of the spirit of life in nature, and which in their meeting present emblems of the meeting of spirits, the meeting of ideals. Just about the time I was born the currents of three movements had met in the life of our country.

One of these movements was religious, introduced by a very great-hearted man of gigantic intelligence, Raja Ram Mohan Roy. It was revolutionary, for he tried to re-open the channel of spiritual life which had been obstructed for many years by the sands and debris of creeds that were formal and materialistic, fixed in external practices lacking spiritual significance.

There was a great fight between him and the orthodox who suspected every living idea that was dynamic. People who cling to an ancient past have their pride in the antiquity of their accumulations, in the sublimity of time-honoured walls around them. They grow nervous and angry when some great spirit, some lover of truth, breaks open their enclosure and floods it with the sunshine of thought and the breath of life. Ideas cause movement and all movements forward they consider to be a menace to their warehouse security.

This was happening about the time I was born. I am proud to say that my father was one of the great leaders of that movement, a movement for whose sake he suffered ostracism and braved social indignities. I was born in this atmosphere of the advent of new ideals, which at the same time were old, older than all the things of which that age was proud.

There was a second movement equally important. A certain great man, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee who, though much older than myself, was my contemporary and lived long enough for me to see him, was the first pioneer in the literary revolution which happened in Bengal about that time.

Our self-expression must find its freedom not only in spiritual ideas but in literary manifestations. But our literature had allowed its creative life to vanish. It lacked movement and was fettered by a rhetoric rigid as death. This man was brave enough to go against the orthodoxy which believed in the security of tombstones and in that perfection which can only belong to the lifeless. He lifted the dead weight of ponderous forms from our language and with a touch of his magic wand aroused our literature from her age-long sleep. What a vision of beauty she revealed to us when she awoke in the fullness of her strength and grace.

There was yet another movement started about this time in my country which was called National. It was not fully political, but it began to give voice to the mind of our people trying to assert their own personality...

The modern young men of India nodded their heads and said that true originality lay not in the discovery of

the rhythm of the essential in the heart of reality but in the full lips, tinted cheeks and bare breasts of imported pictures. The same spirit of rejection, born of utter ignorance, was cultivated in other departments of our culture... The spirit of revolt had just awakened when I was born and some people were already trying to stem the tide. This movement had its leaders in my own family, in my brothers and cousins, and they stood up to save the people's mind from being insulted and ignored by the people themselves. —From *Talks in China*'

## NEGRO SPIRITUALS

By C. F. ANDREWS.

One of the most remarkable things I have learnt in America, during my visit is the immensely rapid progress of the Negro race in intellectual and spiritual things. No other people in the world have achieved such an advance in so short a time during the last century. At the present moment I am writing this article at the Institution called Tuskegee, which was founded fifty years ago by Booker Washington.* From the very first Negroes themselves have been the builders of the fabric in every direction, while the white race has looked on with sympathy, the Institution which Booker Washington founded in 1881 has remained steadily independent. Again and again I have been struck by the fact that every part of it is a creation of the Negro race itself.

As a consequence of their creative energy the Negro people, who have worked night and day to build up this

*Deenabandhu C. F. Andrews has dedicated one of his compilations *(Gandhi's Ideas)* to Principal Robert Russa Moton and his staff at Tuskegeo Institution, Alabama.

Institution, pouring in their wealth of Sacrifice in unstinted measure, have attained an end which no one could have dreamt of fifty years ago. Everything to-day is so well conducted and efficiently managed that it compares favourably with any American Institution in the land. No one can ever say, henceforth, that the Negro race, is less capable than other races of mankind.

But this is only half the picture. The most vital factor of all still remains to be explained; for there is a spirit in this Institution which breathes of life and health and young vigour. There is a soul in it which tells of faith and hope and love and all that is highest in man. I have met the same exalted spirit in such Creative Institutional work in India, as that which I knew at Shantiniketan.† I have seen the same spirit still renewing its youth in beautiful old Marburg in Germany. It is easy to recognize it, because it goes far deeper than that which outwardly appears and it immediately touches the heart. When I first came to India and visited the Gurukul on the banks of the Ganges at Hardwar,¶ I felt in a moment the same spirit of the divine in Man, creating new human forms.

Here at Tuskegee, in the midst of practical America, the outward things are at first more evident than in India with its dreams of the divine, and Germany with its mystical philosophy. There was at first an emphasis on practical achievement in bricks and mortars and technical machinery, which in one sense was a matter of natural

†Poet Tagore's Abode of Peace, one hundred miles away from Calcutta; Bolpur Railway Station, Santiniketan Post, Birbhum Dt. Bengal. Santiniketan School has grown up as Visva-Bharati or International University.

¶The Himalayan University associated with the memory of the martyr-saint, Swami Shraddhananda formerly known as Pandit Munshi Ram. —*N.L.*

pride to the Negro race, whose talents had been previously despised. But these did not really touch the heart, or make the appeal to the very highest that is in our human nature.

But when I heard the singing of the songs which had been composed by the forefathers of this American Negro race from the very depths of slavery, now sung by the children who were free, in a school of their own creation, immediately my heart was touched and the very same spiritual vision seemed to come before my eyes, that had been apparent to me in those other creative impulses of the human heart that I have already mentioned... It seems to me that there is no race upon the earth more richly endowed with gifts for the future than the Negro race.

—I.S R. 24. 8. 1929.

## RAJA RAM MOHAN ROY CENTENARY
(1774–1833)

BY C. F. ANDREWS.

A long and careful study of world history has convinced me that Raja Ram Mohan Roy was by far the greatest religious genius of the 19th century. Even today, after a hundred years, we are only slowly and hesitatingly working out the supremely vital principles for which he had lived and died. Born in the narrowest of family religious circles in Bengal, in the later part of the 18th century, he had broken through one barrier after another which had confined the religious and social outlook of his age. He seemed guided by a divine instinct within, from childhood onward, which made him always direct his course to one single end, the Religious Unification of Mankind.

The more I have studied his life the more I have felt that this principle of the Divine Unity, *creating* human

unity and brotherhood, was the guiding principle underlying all he did and said and thought. This is a conception which has its deepest roots in Indian soil. The search for the One is the passion of the Indian heart. Satisfaction only comes when that divine passion has found its fulfilment.

In practice he was equally insistent on finding the unity of human life in Society. He realised that the divine in mankind was obscured and obstructed by social abuses such as existed in his own day. Fortunately he found among those who had come out to India from England certain enlightened men and women who were ready to go to any lengths in moral courage and perseverance in order to rescue mankind from those abuses which had generally crept in. Thus East and West were able to work together, for the first time, in a marvellously effective manner. Lord William Bentinck and Duff were great, each in their own way, and they fully recognised the moral genius of Raja Ram Mohan Roy. Miss Mary Carpenter was in her own sphere equally great and collaborated with him to the end.

The closing days of Raja Ram Mohan Roy's life were saddened by much physical suffering, but at the same time enlightened with the glow of the rapid passage of certain moral and political reforms which were completed in the very year in which he died. For, only a month before he passed away, he was able to learn that the Bill abolishing Slavery had been passed, and the Emancipation of the Negro Race had begun. How greatly the news of this cheered his last days, we can read in the memoirs which have been written about him. He died in an auspicious year,— the year when slavery was abolished and the great Reform measures granting political liberty were

being carried through. It was the year also when the change in the East India Company's constitution was confirmed, whereby racial equality was enunciated for the first time.

As one looks back over the whole century since the death of Raja Ram Mohan Roy it is possible, as an historian, to watch the strength of the current setting in the opposite direction and rendering nugatory the very things for which Raja Ram Mohan Roy stood out so boldly and bravely. Racial equality in India and in the rest of the world has not yet been attained. Political equality has been swept away, since the War, by one dictatorship after another. Even slavery has returned in the forms of indentured labour, and in wage slavery under the cruel lash of economic pressure, and also in forced labour in many different forms. Central † Africa and the Indian States are examples of the bad relics of the old slave system. What would have troubled Raja Ram Mohan Roy most of all would have been to find religious tolerance, on which he laid such stress, passing on into religious indifference and from thence into militant hatred of religion.

Thus the great causes for which he stood out so boldly have not had an unchequered career. The backward current has often proved too rapid for any forward progress. Yet we can be certain that, with a faith and courage so strong as his, Raja Ram Mohan Roy would have been today, if he had been living with us, in the vanguard of the great struggle for human liberty.... His spirit is with us still to cheer us on.—I. S. R. 21-10-1933.

† Deenabandhu C. F. Andrews knows Africa and her people through and through. As early as 1922, I heard him say that the shadow of the *Cross* was lengthening over Africa. Some Indian States have abolished forced labour. The Nizam's State has set an example.—*N.L.*

# RISHI DAYANANDA CENTENARY
## (1824–1883)

BY SRI AUROBINDO.

Among the great company of remarkable figures that will appear to the eye of posterity at the head of the Indian Renaissance, one stands out by himself with peculiar and solitary distinctness, one unique in his type as he is unique in his work... It was Kathiawar that gave birth to Dayananda, the puissant renovator and new-creator. And something of the very soul and temperament of that peculiar land entered into his spirit, something of Girnar and the rocks and hill, something of the voice and puissance of the sea, something of that humanity which seems to be made of the virgin and unspoilt stuff of Nature, fair and robust in body, instinct with a fresh and primal vigour, crude in the crude but in a developed nature capable of becoming a great force of genial creation.

... Other great Indians have helped to make India of today by a sort of self-pouring into the psychological material of the race, a spiritual infusion of themselves into the fluent and indeterminate mass which will one day settle into consistency and appear as a great formal birth of Nature. They have entered in as a sort of leaven, a power of unformed stir and ferment out of which forms must result. One remembers them as great souls and great influence who live on in the soul of India. They are in us and we would not be what we are without them. But of no precise form can we say that this was what the man meant, still less that this form was the very body of that spirit.

The example of Mahadev Govind Ranade (1842-1901) presents itself to my mind as the very type of this peculiar action so necessary to a period of large and complex formation. If a foreigner were to ask us what this Mahratta Economist, reformer, patriot precisely did that we give him so high a place in our memory, we should find it a little difficult to answer. We should have to point to those activities of a mass of men in which his soul and thought were present as a formless former of things, to the great figures of present day Indian life who received the breath of his spirit. And in the end we should have to reply by a counter question, "What would Maharashtra of to-day have been without Mahadev Govind Ranade and what would India of to-day be without Maharashtra?" But even with those who were less amorphous and diffusive in their pressure on men and things, even with workers of a more distinct energy and action, I arrive fundamentally at the same impression. Vivekananda (1863—1902) was a soul of puissance if ever there was one, a very lion among men, but the definite work he has left behind is quite incommensurate with our impression of his creative might and energy. We perceive his influence still working gigantically we know not well how, we know not well where in something that is not yet formed, something leonine, grand intuitive, upheaving that has entered the soul of India and we say, "Behold Vivekananda still lives in the soul of his Mother and in the souls of her children." So it is with all. Not only are the men greater than their definite works, but their influence is so wide and formless that it has little relation of any formal work that they have left behind them.

Very different was the manner of working of Dayananda. Here was one who did not infuse himself informally into the indeterminate soul of things, but stamped his figure indelibly as in bronze on men and things. Here was one whose formal works are the very children of his spiritual body, children fair and robust and full of vitality, the image of their creator. Here was one who knew definitely and clearly the work he was sent to do, chose his materials, determined his condition with a sovereign clairvoyance of the spirit and executed his conception with the puissant mastery of the born worker. As I regard the figure of this formidable artisan in God's workshop, images crowd on me which are all of battle and work and conquest and triumphant labour. Here, I say to myself, was a very soldier of Light, a warrior in God's world, a sculptor of men and institutions, a bold and rugged victor of the difficulties which matter presents to spirit. And the whole sums itself up to me in a powerful impression of *spiritual practicality*. The combination of these two words, usually so divorced from each other in our conceptions, seems to me the very definition of Dayananda. ...In Dayananda's life we see always the puissant jet of this spiritual practicality... Ram Mohan Roy, that other great soul and puissant worker who laid his hand in Bengal and shook her—to what mighty issues?—out of her long indolent sleep by her rivers and rice fields,—Ram Mohan Roy stopped short at the Upanishads. Dayananda looked beyond and perceived that our true original seed was the Veda... (Aryan Tract Series No. 2—A summary).

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# SRI RAMAKRISHNA CENTENARY

## (1836—1886)

BY SIR MIRZA ISMAIL.

The centenary of the birth of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa is being celebrated in many places in India. These celebrations remind one of the poet's words:

"To live in the hearts we leave behind is not to die."

Men like Sri Ramakrishna live for ever.

While the centenary of the birth of Sri Ramakrishna, which we are gathered here to celebrate, is essentially a religious occasion, it is religious in a broad and not in any narrow sense of that word. The spiritual experiences of that great saint and seer constitute the very epitome of the central truth of all religions of the world, namely, that Beauty, Love and Truth are the three-fold aspects of Divinity.

No one who is aware of the "madding crowd's ignoble strife," of the fanaticism in matters religious which is eating into the vitals of the national life, can fail to see how sorely is the world in need of a spiritual recipe the essence of which is something more definite than a mere intellectual understanding of rival faiths, and something more positive than a mere tolerance of them. The mind of the world is distraught; fear, suspicion and hatred flourish. It is in such a world that the great lesson of Sri Ramakrishna's life is felt to be of the greatest value.

Not only did he make a detached and disinterested intellectual examination of the greater religions, but he

actually made an experimental trial of their principles, tested them in his own life, and proved what ultimately was of real and enduring worth. He entered the inner sanctuary of each faith, carrying out its precepts and obeying its commandments. He lived the faiths and then testified. And what was his testimony? He rediscovered for himself the Eternal Verity, that there is but one flame illuminating all religions, that there is a way of Krishna, there is a way of Christ, there is a way of Buddha and there is a way of Mahomed, but that "all roads lead to the same goal." He rediscovered for himself through the practice of austerities and renunciation and through spiritual travail what has been immortalised in that memorable couplet of Pope:

> For forms of faith let graceless zealots fight,
> His can't be wrong whose life is in the right.

In the opinion of * Sir Francis Younghusband, Sri Ramakrishna has "done more for the bringing together of the adherents of the different religions than any one else. He was a genius at entering into the real spirit of other religions." What appeals to me more than anything else in his character is his great catholicity, his respect for other religions, his love for his fellow-creatures. His cry was Renounce! Renounce! "Thou shalt renounce, renounce," said Goethe, "that is the

* Author of such books as *The Living Universe*, and *The Challenge of the Himalayas*. Sir Francis Younghusband is chairman of the Indian Village Welfare Association, London.

everlasting song which every hour, our whole life long, sings hoarsely in our ears."

Recluse though he was, with renunciation as his spiritual battel-cry, yet more than most of the great religious teachers of the world did he lay emphasis on the ideal of perfect happiness. The key-note of his life and teaching was optimism. "You and I", he told his disciples, "came to the earth a band of minstrels." His was a message of song, of hope and of felicity. For, after all, is this not what all the world is aseeking, and is not happiness the ultimate object of life?

You will hardly expect me to relate to you the life-history of the great saint. His name and that of his great disciple are known all the world over.

### VILLAGE GUIDANCE

Swami Vivekananda carried his Master's message of truth and love to America and the whole world, and founded the Ramakrishna Mission in Calcutta, to work out the national ideals of renunciation and service.

The Mission has brought into existence about five hundred educated *Sannyasins* who lead a life of renunciation and **practical spirituality*, and who preach in a hundred different parts of the world the universal principles of morality and the harmony of religions. They also carry on philanthropic and charitable work

* This is true of the Arya Samaj also. Please see my Italics on page 127.

for the benefit of men, women and children, irrespective of creed or colour.

Swami Vivekananda visited Mysore in 1892. He was only twenty-four then and unknown to the world. His late Highness Sri Chamarajendra Wadiyar of revered memory was so well impressed with the Swami that he assisted him to go to Chicago to expound the spiritual message of India at the Parliament of Religions held in that city in 1893. His success at that conference was remarkable.

Mysore was among the first places to welcome Sri Ramakrishna's teachings, and an *ashrama* sprang up in Bangalore thirty years ago to carry on this work of re-constituting once again our society on the firm foundation of universal truth. Within the last twelve years, another *ashrama* has come into existence here in Mysore.

During these last thousand years and more, Mysore has always welcomed most warmly every great movement as it came into being for the uplift of humanity. She has established great *Pithas* or seats of learning to propagate the thoughts and ideals of Shankara, Ramanuja, Madhwa, Basava and Jaina, and these are still existing and working, after the lapse of centuries of achievement and success.

It is true, as a Belur stone inscription of 1397 testifies, that Mysore has supported the worship of God in every form, and provided for the service of humanity under every banner.

I am very glad to learn that you are going to take advantage of this centenary celebration to start training young men for social service, especially in Mysore. I do hope that you will train a band of young men to undertake village improvement work and serve in rural areas, where there is so much to do to raise the standard of living. I hope that your noble and unselfish efforts will attract intelligent and educated young men, filled with a desire for the service of their Motherland.

## ROMAIN ROLLAND ON RAMAKRISHNA

"Our place ought always to be beside the poor and the humble, those who labour and perish," said M. Romain Rolland in a message to the Parliament of Religions at Calcutta. "Nobody has aspired more than myself during the entire life-time to reconcile and unite among themselves all the great forces of the human spirit, the energies of faith in the universal life and of love working for all mankind. I am happy that such an assembly of world unity has been placed under the invocation of the Master of Love for all living beings, our dear Sri Ramakrishna."

**"Allowing for differences of country and of time Ramakrishna is the younger brother of our Christ." Ramain Rolland in *The Life of Ramakrishna p. 13.***

# "TOWARDS THE UNDERSTANDING OF JESUS"

(BY C. F. ANDREWS)

I know no book of the same type that has helped me more than this little book, *Towards The Understanding of Jesus*, published by the MacMillan Company, New York, and written by Prof. Vladimir Simkhovitch, of Columbia University. It is really one essay taken out of a larger work dealing with the fall of Rome and the agrarian condition of Medieval Europe. The Essay on Jesus is now printed separately.

It is the attempt to place the teaching of Jesus within the setting of His times and surroundings, which makes its unique value both to the historian and to the man of religion. I have kept the little volume with me on many railway journeys; and it would be no exaggeration to say, that I have read it through afresh from beginning to end at least six times,—a thing that I am rarely able to do with any modern volume in my own very busy life with all its varied interests and occupations.

The book has interested me most deeply of all, because the author's conclusions seem to show a state of things under the Roman Empire in Palestine, with which Jesus dealt directly, not at all unlike the present condition of affairs in India within the British Empire. The spiritual method of Jesus in dealing with the situation is remarkably akin to that which Mahatma

Gandhi has outlined to-day for Indian patriotism to follow. The parallel runs extraordinarily close in vital particulars, amid divergencies due to altered circumstances and environments.

It would not be possible to condense the argument of the book into a single article or review, nor would it be fair to the writer of the book to do so; but I would urge every one who can to get a copy of his own and read it; and I would suggest to Indian booksellers, including such publishers as the Christian Literature Society, and the Y. M. C. A. Publication Department, to keep the book in stock also; for when once it becomes actually known, it is certain to be read carefully by those who are sincere searchers after truth.

I had read, in previous years, Prof. T. R. Glover's 'Conflict of Religions within the Roman Empire' with its remarkable chapter on the Religion of Jesus. I had read also, with intense interest, when it first came out, Albrecht Schweitzer's *Quest of the Historical Jesus.* These two books made a very deep impression upon me and also one by Prof. F. C. Burkitt on the Transmission of the Gospels, dealing with the Marcan Tradition. But somehow none of these proved so convincing to me as this book by Prof. Simkhovitch. It is for this reason that I commend it, in this brief review, to readers in India.

—I. S. R. 16. 5. 1925.

**A list of books by Andrews and Schweitzer is given elsewhere.**

## FOREIGN MISSIONS IN CHINA

I. S. R. *August 2, 1930.*

The Chinese Republican Government have issued orders prohibiting the establishment of primary schools, kindergarten or normal schools for Chinese students by associations organised by persons not of Chinese nationality. The Chinese Government have also prohibited, it would seem, the public preaching of Christianity. The Rev. Dr. A. R. Kepler who supplies this information to the *Dnyanodaya* regards these orders as an attempt to "supress" Christianity. The same gentleman adds that "the significant fact is that although many of the leading personalities in the Government are opposed to these measures (not a few of them are themselves Christian), nevertheless they are helpless, and becoming incressingly so in the face of the growing radicalism and power of the Local Tangpu or Local Party Headquarters." It is inconceivable that Christian Ministers, however strong the pressure may be from Party Headquarters, would agree to measures having for their object the suppression of Christianity. The more probable explanation is that the Chinese Christians feel as several Indian Christians do that foreign Christian Missions are in effect operating as agencies for the dissemination of the political and cultural influence of their respective countries. They perhaps agree with the Party Headquarters in holding that "cultural invasion, as an implement of the imperialistic powers for the exploitation of China, is more dangerous to the existence

and development of the Chinese people than political and economic exploitation." This is the reason advanced by the Executive Committee for the measures referred to. In the Madras Presidency, the other day, an American Missionary was obliged to leave the country because he entertained Mr. Reginald Reynolds who has been an appreciative student of Mahatma Gandhi's movement. We are not aware that the Missionary Journals published any correspondence from any Missionary on the incident. If the Chinese Government were sure that an undertaking such as all foreign Missionaries uncomplainingly give in British India will be observed with equal strictness in China, they might have been content with it. But the European or American Missionary in Asiatic countries feels it his duty to make the people ashamed of their heritage and surroundings as the first step towards converting them to the special brand of Christianity intended for subject nations. No national Government can afford to let this sort of undermining propaganda to be carried on particularly when the country is still in the transitional stage from an autocratic to a free regime.

## THE WORLD FELLOWSHIP OF FAITHS

(BY K. NATARAJAN)

In America, I was one of those asked to speak on the World Fellowship platform, which I did twice. The first occasion was a luncheon given by the Fellowship where, referring to a remark of the Chinese leader, Dr. Hu Shi, who doubted whether there was a place for people like

him, who did not believe in religion as a means of human regeneration, in the Fellowship of Faiths, I pointed out that Faith meant certainty as well as honest doubt. "There lives more faith in honest doubt, Believe me, than in half the creeds." One can reverently believe as well as disbelieve. The essence of religion was the disinterested persuit of truth and the service of man. The Father of Chinese Nationalism, as the Doctor had been called, had therefore a place and an important one in the Fellowship. Hinduism had no dogmas. Among its avatars was Buddha who was silent about God and included in the Hindu canon was the non-theistic Sankhya philosophy whose founder, Kapila, was exalted in the *Gita* to the position of the greatest of perfected ones.

My second speech for the Fellowship, was made on the last day of our stay in Chicago at Hotel Morrison. The subject was the World Implications of the Gandhi Movement. The central principle of the Gandhi movement was Ahimsa, which really meant the same thing as *Charity in St. Paul's famous verses in his letter to the Corinthians. It had a value for the world far in excess of the civil disobedience movement which was a local and incidental episode. War could not be prevented by Disarmament even if this was carried out completely. Men will fight with fists if they want to fight. The only permanent means of preventing war was the adoption of the creed of non-violence. Men have gradually come to adopt this principle in families, in communities, and in nations. It is only a step forward to extend it to international relations and, therefore, quite practicable.

— I. S. R. 4. 11. 1933.

* In the Bible, the word *charity* means Love. —*N.L.*

## A POLISH LOVE OF INDIA

The *Hindu Organ* of Jaffna writes:—Mr. W. Loga is an educationalist and moral reformer of Poland. He is a great lover and follower of the Hindu Philosophy. He is a master of some European languages and read the Russian translation of the *Gita* about a quarter of a century ago. Then he read M. Romain Rolland's volumes on Ramakrishna and Vivekananda which, like him, have inspired a legion of the West. Mr. Loga witnessed in the little sketch about Poland: 'I expressed the feelings which moved my soul on landing in India. They explain the innermost desires that led me from the far-off West and brought me after a long journey to this Punya Bhumi. I whispered then on landing here: "Welcome, Enternal India, the blessed land of the great spiritual nation, the sacred land of the great spiritual nation, the sacred land of the great teachers of humanity, the earth of my ancestor Aryans. My dream of many years to see with my eyes, what in the inner vision I saw long ago by reading and studying the admirable works of India's Sages is now realised. And **like a tired child who comes back to its mother after finishing its games and plays, I come to you, dear brothers,* with a view to realise the longing of my forefathers to be back at home, after a long journey of some thousands of years, during which the soul has been vainly searching for God in external things and activities, I have come here, then to find rest for my soul, to find that Himalayan Calmness and Serenity that are characteristic of you. This is the innermost motive that led me to start on this great travel across lands and seas." —I. S. R. 4. 11. 1933.

* *Cf.* Tagore's idea in Part I.

## Dr. SUNDERLAND'S MESSAGE

I. S. R. *September 7, 1935.*

The illuminating articles which we published in the last five issues of the *Reformer* on the profound change which has come over western thought on questions relating to religion, should have convinced the reader that materialism no longer holds the field as the moving impulse of modern life in Europe and America. If western nations still continue in their materialistic ways it is from habit and not from conviction. It is this fact that makes much of Tilak's onslaughts in his *Gita Rahasya* on western materialism stale and meaningless. There is more materialism expounded in the area between Sandhurst Road and Chowpathi (Bombay) in a week than in the centres of western thought in a year. The greatest proof of the reality of a thing is its universality. No human belief has been so universal and in all ages and lands than the belief in an over-ruling and righteous Power which guides and controls the destinies of men and nations. That Spirit is the sole reality which to the west is a new discovery is a truth anciently realised in India. The important thing for both East and West is to find and pursue the course of conduct which belief in the sole reality of Spirit dictates. Here is a big sphere for co-operation between the best minds of the world. International, interracial peace and harmony cannot be achieved on the material plane where what one gains involves a loss to another. In the

spiritual sphere, on the other hand, the gain of one is the gain of all. The spirit of competition, of bargain, has no place in the spiritual sphere. The morning sun first illuminates the hill tops. Great ideas first dawn on the master minds in every age. They slowly permeate into life but they surely do so. *The world is in travail for a new birth. India has a great part to play in the near future.* All that she has to do is to be true to her highest self.

## TURKEY UNDER KEMAL ATATURK

I. S. R. *January 18, 1936*

The assumption that Europe represents a unit of civilisation is generally accepted more for convenience than as a matter of fact. Neither under Pope nor Emperor was the ideal of European unity fully achieved. The greatest factor against this development in the pre-War world was the Ottoman Empire. The most powerful influence against it in post-War Europe is Soviet Russia. But the problem for Europe is still the same, the assimilation of a stubborn opposition. And both pre-War Turkey and post-War Russia turn to Asia to withstand the assimilating force. Turkey and Russia have changed places. For as Russia discarding nationalism turned to the world idea of communism, Turkey gave up the ideal of Pan-Islam and took on Western Nationalist ideals. Under the Sultans too Turkey was not against Europeanisation. She was against too rapid change and had very often to resist foreign aggression by reverting to older ideals. But it was under Kemal Ataturk that the State

realised, as *modern China has done now, that in modernisation, swift and thorough, lay Turkey's one chance of survival. If she was to exist in the midst of Europe, she had to cultivate the European mentality. And Europe which in Russia intervened to prevent the abandonment of European ideals, stepped in significantly enough in Turkey on the side of the reactionaries who opposed Westernisation. Having broken up the Ottoman Empire and divided its spoils, the Great Powers perferred to maintain an enfeebled theocracy. But the attempt failed. The reason why Turkey had to go father in her occidental reforms than Japan which, after all, has only adopted Western technique, is that her geographical position in the world necessitated it, even as a mere measure of self-defence. That she was able to do so successfully was because Turkey—after the loss of her Christian-inhabited possessions and North African territories—was European, as the rest of Eastern Europe. Therein is the main reason why Kemal Ataturk succeeded where Amanullah Khan failed in Afghanistan. Professor Henry Elisha Allen has given us in *The Turkish Transformation*, (The University of Chicago Press, Price $ 2·50) a brilliant study of the modern Turkish movement which reveals how completely altered is the outlook of the average Turk.

A great force in bringing European ideas to Asiatic countries is the missions and one would have expected modern Turkey to have depended greatly on missionary institutions for support in their work of reformation.

* "The religious adventurer has little scope in China." Compare *My Country and My People* by Dr. Lin Yutang (Heinemann)

• I. S. R. 13. 6. 1936.

Mr. Allen reveals in his book that Kemal Ataturk had to establish a strict control over proselytising agencies before he launched his programme. Not only because of its peculiar interest to India but also on account of the frequent charge brought up against Turkey that it is anti-religious, it will be worth while to consider this aspect in detail. The first reason why missions had to be watched in Turkey was that they represented foreign interests. From this followed the second charge that in their schools foreign ideals were indoctrinated into the students. As thorough as the Soviet, Turkey banned the reading of even 'Silas Marner.'

...On the denationalising effect of Christian education the book throws special light. Every other religion is occupied with reforming itself but the Christian mission, with a smug faith that it is not like the others, concerns itself with the faults of other religion.

...Mr. Allen concludes that Turkey is no place for a missionary who is not willing to forego all ideas of proselytising and to devote himself wholeheartedly to the task of helping Turkey develop according to her own genius, supplying only such Western or Christian viewpoints as the Turks themselves call upon him to suggest. No wonder missionaries in India with the experience of other nationally awakened countries start at every shadow. In view of the drastic measures adopted in Turkey and other states, Dr. R. P. Paranjpye's valuable suggestion for invalidating the conversion of minors and making registration compulsory for changes of faith is perfectly innocuous but it has aroused considerable missionary opposition, the unconvincing argument against it being that it is an encroachment on individual rights....

# INDIA AND THE WORLD

I. S. R. *September 12, 1936.*

Whatever one may think of the opinions on economic, social, political and religious questions of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, one recognises that he is an outstanding figure in contemporary India. What makes him this, is that his views on questions relating to his own country, are related to and derived from an outlook which extends to the world. He is here one with Poet Tagore rather than with Gandhiji. Gandhiji's doctrine of non-violence has received world-wide attention, it is true. But Gandhiji conceived and worked it out primarily with reference to Indian tradition and Indian aptitudes. Tagore starts from the universal and, it is to be feared, lingers too long there and, indeed, seems deliberately to avoid coming down to particulars. Gandhiji starts from particulars, and only incidentally rises to universals. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru does not think in terms of the universe as Tagore understands it. His universe is this world—here and now—with the attainment of material good for its goal. He is universal in that he views the problems of India in their relation to the world which is his universe. So far as we can recall, no Indian political leader, past and present, has come up to the Pandit's level on this plane. His view would have seemed abstract and academic before the World War (1914—1918). That War and the consequences which followed it and are still flowing

out of it, have demonstrated its terrible concreteness. To take the most recent instances. The *New Statesman* writing of Anglo-Egyptian settlement, observes: "For this, thanks are due to Mr. Eden and Nahas Pasha, but chiefly to Signor Mussolini." The extinction of Ethiopia has helped the emancipation of Egypt. Two years ago, meeting a cotton merchant in the train, this writer asked how his business was getting on. "Some improvement," he said, adding quickly "thanks to President Roosevelt." Agricultural adjustment in America raised the price of Indian cotton by about Rs. 50. The Montagu reforms were the direct outcome of the World War, as the Hoare constitution was the outcome of what seemed to be World Peace. If an Indian constitution was being forged today it will be very different. Indian Swaraj will be hastened or retarded by the movements of Japan in China.

...No previous President of the National Congress has laid strees on this interdependence as Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has. Glimpses of his outlook are scattered in his Autobiography. It is more definitely indicated in the title of his present book, *India and the World*, published by Allen & Unwin.

...The stress which the Pandit now and then lays on "alien" and "foreign" is rather incongruous with his conception of the Indian problem as integrated to world problems. These words have ceased to have any value as an argument to people who view national questions in their relation to the world as a whole.

## THE VICEROY ON WORLD TRENDS

I. S. R. *December 5, 1936.*

It has been evident from the first that Lord Linlithgow was not likely to conceive that his function as Governor-General of India was limited to the maintenance of 'law and order' as his immediate predecessor did. His first speech which was broadcast gave proof that the new Viceroy took a larger view of his task in this country. His later acts and pronouncements have confirmed the impression. His speech at the Chelmsford Club last Saturday was a convincing proof that Lord Linlithgow's thoughts are not limited to the routine of his high office.

Lord Linlithgow spoke appreciatively of the tendency in India of public men to view Indian problems in relation to their international background and not merely with reference to local and, often, parochial conditions.... He said: "It shows that Indian thought and Indian opinion are assuming that attribute of national consciousness which leads a great people to feel responsibility not merely for its own advancement, but also for the progress of mankind everywhere." Another influence serving the same useful end is the growing interest in the concerns of Indians over-seas, which has provided common ground on which the Government and the people of India have been co-operating. This is but an extension of the philosophy which bids us think beyond ourselves as the surest means of acquiring mental peace and becoming helpful in the service of mankind.

# FUTURE OF
# CHRISTIAN MISSIONS

## GANDHIJI ON SWADESHI

I. S. R. *March 12, 1916.*

Whether one may agree with him or not, one must concede that Mr. Gandhi has a way of putting things in a manner which arrests attention. And, after all, it is doubtful if any more or any better intellectual service can be rendered by any man to his fellows. We had occasion recently to complain of the utter absence of correlation in the ideas of some who aspire to lead public opinion. A gentleman will speak of democratic ideals in one breath and in the next extol the time-honoured *Varnashrama dharma* as the grandest social system devised on earth. He will enlarge eloquently on the blessings of British rule, and, in the next sentence, denounce Western civilisation of which British rule is one of the first products, as rank materialism. Mr. Gandhi is not the man to be satisfied with such free and easy methods of leadership. He has striven earnestly to frame a theory of life which will be a sufficient basis for all life's activities. In his address to the Madras Missionary Conference, he attempted a definition of Swadeshi which would cover all the reaction of the Indian to modern religious, political and industrial influences.

Swadeshi, he is reported to have said, " is that spirit within us which restricts us in the use and service of our immediate surroundings to the exclusion of the more remote." He illustrated the application of this

principle thus. As for religion, in order to satisfy the requirements of the definition, he must restrict himself to his ancestral religion. If he found it defective he would serve it by purging it of its defects. In the domain of politics, he would make use of the indigenous institutions and serve them by curing them of their proved defects. In that of economics, he would use only things that are produced by his immediate neighbours and serve those industries by making them efficient and complete where they might be found wanting....

## THE PARSI PILGRIM FATHERS

I. S. R., *February 22, 1920.*

**Sanjan.** On Sunday, the 15th February 1920, Sir Jamsetjee Jeejibhoy before a large gathering of Parsis assembled on the spot, made a happy speech enlarging on the significance of the column dedicated that day at Sanjan to commemorate the landing of the Parsi Pilgrim Fathers on Indian soil. The Sanjan column bears the following inscription:

Homage to thee O, Ahura Mazda. This column has been erected by the Parsis of India in pious memory of their good Iranian ancestors, who, after the downfall of their Empire under their last monarch Yazdazard Shahriyar, for the sake of their religion dearer than life, left their native land, and suffering innumerable hardships at length landed at this once famous port of Sanjan, and settled under the protection of its kind Hindu ruler, Jadi Rana. We worship the good strong beneficent Fravashis of the holy.

So the brother peoples who parted in the uplands of the Punjab before the dawn of history, in bitter hatred calling each the other's light his darkness and his darkness, the other's light, meet again after centuries, guided no doubt by the sub-conscious instinct which found expression in the first words of the leader of the Parsi pioneers to Raja Jadi Rana: "We shall be the friends of all Hindustan.!" As for Sanjan,

> Where rolled the deep, there grows the tree
> O earth, what changes hast thou seen!
> There where the long waste rolls has been
> The stillness of the central sea!

## EINSTEIN'S ACID TEST

I. S. R. *March 20, 1921*

The most impressive passage in the lecture of Mr. Israel Cohen, representative of the Executive of the Zionist World Association was that in which he described the condition of the Jews in Eastern Europe —especially in Poland—which, he said, was ten times worse than what it was before the War. The deeds of savagery against the Jews which he re-counted, moved the audience deeply. We have had Jews in India almost from the time of the Dispersion, and they have always been known as a law-abiding, industrious and peaceful community, respected by other communities and never in conflict with any of them. We have had Hindu-Mahomedan riots, Hindu-Christian, Mahomedan-Parsi, and Indian-English riots, besides riots as between

Hindu castes and Mahomedan sects. But there is no record of any disturbance in which the Jews were concerned. It is impossible for an Indian to imagine any circumstance that can lead to such murderous persecution of this peaceful people from whom sprang the illustrious founder of Christianity. Indians, too, have had their tribulations, but they have never felt the pang of being without the fatherland. The warm sympathy of the ancient communities of this country is with the Zionists in their endeavour to re-establish themselves in their ancestral home in the Holy Land of three great world-religions. We trust, however, that the new Jerusalem will be more in tune with the ancient spirituality of the Hebrew race than with the money-markets of the modern world in which, with its disabilities as a people without a country, it has been obliged to find its best known field of distinction. As an Asiatic and Eastern race domiciled for centuries in Europe, the Jews have special qualifications for becoming the interpreters of the East to the West and the West to the East.†

†Prof. W. E. Hocking of Harvard went to Palestine some years ago, as a believer in the Balfour Declaration, to study the question on the spot. In his *Spirit of World Politics*, he suggests ways in which the Declaration may be implemented so as not to injure Arab interests. For the Zionism of Einstein, please read his address on "Reconstruction in Palestine" in his book, *The World as I See it*. I.S.R. 3.10.1936. This noble scientist is a Jew of international reputation. He is, I believe, an exile in America. A conversation between Rabindranath Tagore and Albert Einstein on the Nature of Reality is published on pages 222–225 of Tagore's book, *The Religion of Man*, Allen & Unwin, London, 1931.—*N.L.*

## THE ALL-INDIA HINDU MAHASABHA

I. S. R. *August 25, 1923.*

The All-India Hindu Mahasabha which commenced its sittings at Benares on Sunday last, is the first striking expression of the Hindu re-action to the accumulating signs of which we have been calling attention from time to time. We use the word "re-action" in its scientific sense and not as meaning a retrograde movement. Since the Mahomedan conquest, Hinduism had been without an all-India organ to adjust, correct and co-ordinate the changes necessitated by the pressure of changes in its environment. To this, to begin with, is due the cleavage between the Hindu orthodoxy of northern and of southern India. The line of cleavage was softened somewhat by the existence of Hindu holy places like Prayag, Benares and Gaya in the north and Rameshwaram, Srirangam and Tirupathi in the south of India. But there has been no considered adjustment of the Northern and Southern ideals of orthodoxy. Then, again, the absence of a co-ordinating organ is responsible for the unbridged gap that there is between philosophical and popular Hinduism. The various mediaeval *bhakti* movements in several parts of the country have, for the same reason, remained unassimilated units in the body of Hinduism. Then there are the modern movements of religious and social reform beginning with Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Pandit Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar down to our own days. All these have to be co-ordinated and correlated in the general body of Hinduism in which they lie loosely together like pebbles on the river bed. That is one great part of the task which awaits the Mahaśabha. But it is not all.

Hinduism is not a kingdom but an empire. It is not one religion but every religion which answers to certain general characteristics. The first and most essential characteristic is that it must have either sprung from, or have become firmly rooted in, the soil of India. Jainism and Sikhism are Indian and, therefore, Hindu in both senses. Buddhism is Indian and Hindu only in the first sense, but the inclusion of Burma* in the Indian Empire—resuming, as the late Sir Willam Hunter finely put it, the eastward march of Indian influence after a break of a thousand years—has made it Indian in the second sense also. Zoroastrianism has for over a thousand years made its home in India and the Parsi wherever he goes is as readily recognised as an Indian as the Hindu, Sikh or Jain. This as well as the fact that the Vedic and Gathic fathers were natural as well as spiritual kinsmen, has rightly prompted the organisers of the Mahasabha to extend their invitation to Parsi scholars. Whenever Indian Christianity organises itself as a national church, with its centre of gravity in India, it will demand and will be welcomed into the commonwealth of religions called Hinduism. So also will be the case with Indian Mahomedanism on the same condition. It was an eminent Mahomedan¶ thinker who suggested some years ago in these columns that all

* "It would be the greatest pity if the political severance of Burma from the Indian Empire was to result in any severance of those bonds alike of culture and of economic interest which have united India and Burma up to now."—H. E. Lord Linlithgow's Speech, Rangoon, January 9, 1937.

¶ The reference is, possibly, to Sir Akbar Hydari. In America, all the inhabitants of India are known as Hindus. *Cf.* Faith and Toleration, I. S. R. 4.10. 1930.—*N. L.*

Indians, irrespective of their religion, should be styled Hindus. Hinduism is careless about creeds. Bhagavan Buddha is one of its recognised *avatars* or incarnations, though He deliberately abstained from any teaching in respect of God and the Soul. The Bhagavat Gita extols as the supremest of perfect men the materialistic philosopher, Kapila, who found in nature the all-sufficient cause of the Universe. But, though Hinduism has many creeds, it has only one patriotism and it is very jealous about it. Hinduism, indeed, is in its larger aspect a religious patriotism rather than a religion

The Mahasabha has made a good beginning by inviting Buddhists, Jains, Sikhs and Parsis to join it in its Benares Session. Dr. G. K. Nariman, the distinguished Parsi Orientalist has supplied the best and most sympathetic account of the proceedings. With his fine historical perspective, he points out the significance of the participation of delegates of these several religions in the Mahasabha. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya who presided, delivered a great speech setting forth the several aspects of the work before the Mahasabha.

His masterstroke, runs the message, was reserved for the treatment of the untouchables. For the first time in history, a respected orthodox Brahmin made a piteously touching appeal on behalf of crores of untouchables. The President of the Hindu Mahasabha, speaking from the hallowed banks of the Ganges, has awakened a chord on behalf of the depressed classes which will reverberate throughout Hindu India and will inspirit and encourage Hindus overseas in their struggle against social and colour tyranny.

## A CHRISTMAS REFLECTION†

I. S. R. *December 22, 1923*

More than nineteen hundred years ago, Jesus Christ was nailed upon the Cross by a Roman Governor. The orthodox Jews who instigated Pilate to commit this infamous crime, were no doubt satisfied that the great movement which Christ had set on foot had failed. Failed! It was Roman Justice that had failed, it was Jewish bigotry that had failed. An Empire which has ceased to heed the voice of Justice and Humanity in the pursuit of its own selfish interests which are always ephemeral, is like a rotten tree which but awaits the first passing blast to come to the ground. The Roman Empire fell, and upon its ruins the Church of Christ rose to a great height of power. And to-day though organised Christianity but feebly reflects the spirit of its Master, the personality of the Master Himself stands forth before all the world with a compelling grandeur.

Never before have so many earnest minds of all races and creeds turned to Him for light and guidance in their perplexities. The number and insight of the new Lives of Christ, are alone evidence of this fresh and deepened interest in His life and teaching. But the most impressive proof of it is that Mahatma $ Gandhi,

† This editorial "has echoed round the world" says the Rev. C. W. Gilkey in his *Jesus And Life To-day*, p. 14, C. L. S., Madras, 1925.

$ "Gandhiji has turned India's face to Christ upon the Cross." I. S. R. 7—5—1922.

a Hindu, has sought for the first time in history to apply the Master's teaching to politics as the best means of raising the people of India to a consciousness of their duty to themselves and to humanity....

Mahatma Gandhi's movement has made the central teaching of Christ known and cherished in quarters to which a hundred years of the propaganda of Christian Missions had not been able to penetrate. And it has presented it in a form readily assimilable to the Indian mind. Not only among Hindus but among Indian Christians also are being revealed a new meaning and a new purpose in the message of the Galilean Prophet, not antagonistic to or destructive of their precious national heritage, but setting it forth in its full intrinsic worth and value. A Hindu becomes a better Hindu, a Mahomedan a better Mahomedan, a Parsi a better Parsi, by following his own ancestral faith in the master light which Jesus lighted nineteen centuries ago. He himself spoke of his message as a leaven which operates in and through the pre-existing stuff of which each nation's life is moulded. Thoughtful Christian Missionaries, we are glad, are coming to realise the need of recasting their old methods in the new light in which Christ appears to-day. To them and to all, we wish a happy Christmas.

*Books by C. F. Andrews*

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## RELIGION IN SELF-GOVERNING INDIA

I. S. R. *October 31, 1931.*

We have been trying to impress on our constitution-makers that the principle of religious neutrality is utterly incompatible with the traditional policy and unsuitable to the actual existing conditions of this country. Indian national policy should be one of recognition and protection of all religions. Our plea has so for gone unheeded and even Mahatma Gandhi, who realises the importance of religion in the national life, has apparently acquiesced in the neutrality formula, though it is possible that he attaches his own special meaning to it. We are not, however, perturbed by the indifference of our political leaders as in our experience, an idea, which has its roots in the history and psychology of a people, is sure to work its way to the surface when the time comes for national construction. Dr. Nicol Macnicol in far-away Edinburgh, has seized the significance of our plea, and in an interesting article in the current number of the *Hibbert Journal* has examined how far it can be given effect to in practice. ...Dr. Macnicol refers to our plea for a policy of protection of all religions.* "This," he writes, "is a deeply interesting suggestion and it leads us to consider whether such a synthesis is actually coming about in the Indian situation." We shall write next week on what Dr. Macnicol says on this point.

*"We firmly believe that harmonious economic and political relations between different countries can grow only out of a harmonised relation in the highest field of all, the spiritual, and it is our fervent hope that the Hocking Commission will be able to open a new and beneficial chapter in the comity of world religions." *Christian Missions on Their Trial.* —I. S. R. October 31, 1931.

## RELIGION IN SWARAJ

I. S. R. *November 7, 1931.*

Dr. Nicol Macnicol in his article on "Religion in Contemporary India," in the October number of *The Hibbert Journal*, makes our views on the right attitude of self-governing India to religions, the basis of an interesting speculation on the possibility of the fusion or merging of all religions in this country into a greater whole. We believe that this possibility is not to be dismissed as fanciful. But when we advocate State protection of all religions as against State neutrality, we do so without reference to that possibility. The policy is not a new one in India. It has stood the test of time and, though, officially inaugurated by the Emperor Asoka, it was always implicit in Indian thought as shown by the fact that it was adopted and followed by all the best and most successful Indian Muslim rulers. It was the policy of the East India Company and in a less measure it was also the policy laid down in the Queen's Proclamation. ...It was a policy of consideration and respect for the freedom of all religious communities to live and prosper without molestation by each other or by outsiders. While such a policy is perfectly compatible with religious men of all sects teaching and preaching their distinctive truths, organized proselytising missions financed, equipped and directed from abroad to effect mass conversions, are certainly repugnant to it. In this and other ways, the original policy has been departed from and we owe many of the worst baffling probems of today in this country to this cause. Under the old policy of protection there was

real equality of treatment as well as complete freedom to carry out internal reforms for all religions. We mentioned the example of Mysore as an object-lesson in collaboration between a Hindu Prince and his Muslim Prime Minister in adapting this ancient policy to the conditions of a modern State, and not, as might be understood from Dr. Macnicol's reference to our observation, as an attempt at bringing about a fusion between the two faiths.

Dr. Macnicol thinks that to the synthetic process which he tries to visualise, Islam will be the most formidable obstacle. This difficulty, which theoretically seems conclusive, has in practice proved to be unsubstantial in numerous cases. A process of fusion has actually been going on between these two seemingly antithetical religions and is still going on unaffected by the wrangles of politicians over electorates and weightages. Dr. Macnicol himself refers to some of these movements but he omits the most important of all, the Sufi cult, which is especially relevant in view of his contention that the Vedanta with its monistic view is an insuperable barrier to a closer union between Hinduism and dualisms like Islam and Christianity. Sufism is a standing contradiction to this *a priori* argument so far as Islam is concerned. Nor is the Vedanta regarded, except by the older type of Christian Missionary, as an insuperable barrier to a closer understanding with Hinduism. We have before us the *United Church Review* for November which contains a striking article by the Rev. J. Ireland Hasler headed "The Gita and its Christian Complement." The title itself is enough to send a shiver down the spine of some of our Missionary friends. Dr. Farquhar made Christianity at least the Crown of Hinduism. The crown is an ornamental

superimposition having no organic relation to the head which bears it often with much uneasiness. But it is commonly understood to mean something final and superior. But Mr. Hasler makes Hinduism and Christianity complementary like the two blades of a scissors. ...And it is undeniable that it is to Jesus Christ more than to any other Teacher that mankind is indebted for the inspiring message that God is Love. No one, whatever faith he may profess, can aspire to have a whole view of God and religion, who has not assimilated this great message of the Carpenter of Nazareth.

## THE BRITISH PRIMATE ON MASS CONVERSIONS

I. S. R. *October 24, 1936.*

We welcome the recent pronouncement of the Archbishop of Canterbury against mass conversions, though, so far as its immediate occasion is concerned, namely, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's announcement about quitting Hinduism as soon as he can muster a sufficient number of the scheduled castes to follow him, it comes a day after the fair. It is definitely known that Christianity and Islam have been ruled out, the first because of its patent inability to deal with race, colour and caste distinctions, and the latter, because of the opposition of the women who have declared themselves as strongly against conversion to a religion which may necessitate their relinquishing the freedom, which they enjoy, of working in the field and the factory. So far as can be ascertained, the religion most in favour at present is Sikhism, though a group in Malabar has declared its

resolve to do without any religion. Conversion from Hinduism to * Sikhism is more or less in the nature of a change from the blue bed to the brown, and while some caste Hindus have publicly expressed their approval of the contemplated change, the larger part of the community is unlikely to offer active opposition to it. Dr. Ambedkar himself has taken a large plot of land in Bombay at a nominal rent on perpetual lease and it is understood that his energies will now be directed to raise a great College open to all communities. The scheme, it is believed, will be financed by some leading Sikhs but the institution will presumably be non-denominational. Dr. Ambedkar has many qualifications for educational work, and we have no doubt that he has found his true vocation in the new enterprise. His Grace of Canterbury has, nevertheless, rendered a signal service to the cause of religion by his emphatic disapproval of §mass conversions, though American missionaries, who are believers in mass production, whether of goods or souls, and follow the lead of the *Indian Witness*, will continue to justify them.

* The Rise And Fall of the Sikh Power. By Rabindranath Tagore. *The Modern Review* for April 1911.

§ With reference to mass conversions of the depressed classes, the Lindsay Commission on Christian Higher Education in India (Oxford University Press, 1931) observed on p. 56 that the "wheels of the Christian Church drag heavily in the sand of their age-long inferiorities and disabilities." *Cf.* The Hocking Report: *Re-Thinking Missions.* A Laymen's Inquiry After One Hundred Years By The Commission of Appraisal. Chairman W. E. Hocking of Harvard, Published by Harper & Brothers, 1932.

## PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS

I. S. R. *March 13, 1937.*

In the first Chicago Parliament of 1893, equality was not conceded but Swami Vivekananda, notwithstanding that he spoke on sufferance, established the claim of the Vedanta to a position of respect in the eyes of other religions. In the World Fellowship of Faiths held in *Chicago four years ago, Catholics and a section of the Protestant Churches declined to co-operate on the ground that they can not accept the equality of other religions with Christianity. Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus and many Christian men and women eminent for their religious and humanitarian work, took part in it and helped to make it the great success it eventually became. The Parliament of Religions held last week in connection with the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary$ in Calcutta, differed from its two predecessors in that it was convened by a non-Christian body in commemoration of a Hindu saint and mystic. Still it was a very relevant question which Gandhiji posed to the Parliament and to which he demanded from it a definite answer—Yes or No. The question was: "Are all the religions equal as we hold or is there any one particular religion which is in the sole possession of truth, the rest being either untrue or a mixture of truth and errors as many believe.?" Sir Francis Younghusband replied; "Just as each child thinks that its own mother is the best in the world, exactly in the same way I think each one of us regards his own religion as the best in the world," That, at any

*Full Report is available in India. Apply to Manager, I. S. R.

$*The Cultural Heritage of India.* Centenary Memorial in three volumes. Ramakrishna Mission, Belur Math, Calcutta, 1937.

rate, he added, was the impression that they gained at the World Fellowship of Faiths they had last year in London.§ In that Congress, Sir Francis went on to observe, each one did honestly believe that his own religion was the best and that was corroborated by his own experience of many years living with men of all faiths. "I naturally consider my own religion the best although I endeavour to keep that impression as far as possible to myself." This answer does not take into account the deeper import of Gandhiji's question. The significance and the relevancy of the question lie in the fact that Christian missionaries from Europe and America are trying to persuade Hindus that Christianity is the sole repository of spiritual truth and that Hinduism is no true religion. They start schools and hospitals as means of predisposing Hindus, mostly poor and ignorant, to give ear to the message which they wish to convey, namely, that Jesus Christ is the Son and only Son of God and that He died on the Cross in order that all mankind might believe in Him and be saved.

Gandhiji's question has a practical end in view. Is propaganda of this kind compatible with the idea of Parliament of Religions? Does love of one's own mother require that one should go about depreciating the mothers of other people and trying to induce them to give up their mothers whether or one's mother is willing to adopt them as her children in the same sense as oneself? Hinduism, as Gandhiji says, implicitly regards all religions as equally pathways to the Divine. In this respect as in so many others, Hinduism stands for Buddhism and all the other sects which sprang from it. Depreciation or even invidious comparison of one's own and others' religions, is opposed

§Full Report with a Foreword by Sir Francis.

to this attitude of mind. Dr. James Pratt in his *Pilgrimage of Buddhism* narrates a conversation with the Prince Patriarch of Siam which well illustrates the Hindu standpoint.... Sir Francis Younghusband's answer to Gandhiji's question is good so far as it goes. But the complete answer is unrealisable except when the idea of one's own mother leads one to the abstraction of Motherhood, in which are comprehended all our separate ideas of our particular mothers. The Parliament of Religions is one of the ways in which the Religion behind all religions will manifest itself in due time. Sri Ramakrishna constantly spoke of the Mother, that is, the Universal Mother. Although he sought to experience God through all religions, living for a time in the discipline and doctrine of each of them, God as the Universal Mother most appealed to him. This was also the case with Shankaracharya, the monistic philosopher.

Dr. Rabindranath Tagore presided at the inaugural session and delivered an address of which Sir Francis Younghusband said that it was worth holding the Parliament of Religions to hear it. Tagore's address at the Parliament of Religions is aglow with poetic feeling.

* * *

## RABINDRANATH TAGORE

### TO THE PARAMAHAMSA RAMAKRISHNA DEVA

Diverse courses of worship from varied springs of fulfilment have mingled in your meditation. The manifold revelation of the joy of the Infinite has given form to a shrine of Unity in your life where from far and near arrive salutations to which I join mine own.

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**Books on Asia**

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The Heritage of Asia. By K. Saunders. Published by Y. M. C. A. 5. Russell Street, Calcutta. (The author gives an interesting account of the leaders of Asiatic Renaissance: Gandhi, Hu Shih and Kagawa. William Axling's biography of Kagawa of Japan—in the same series—has been reviewed by me in I. S. R)

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*(Reference to Introductory pages omitted)*

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